# The Nation.

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EDITORIAL

## EXODUS POLITICS

A ship docked at Limassol, Cyprus, was bombed early last week. Its scheduled passengers were unarmed Palestinian deportees seeking a symbolic return home. The Palestine Liberation Organization's plan to re-enact the 1947 journey of Jewish refugees on the Exodus has been condemned by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir as a "declaration of war." But in a conflict in which unequivocal recognition of each other's rights is rare, the P.L.O.'s now-listing attempt to evoke the Exodus suggests a different message: Both peoples are entitled to return to their homeland.

Although more than fifty Palestinians have been killed and thousands beaten since the beginning of December, the Palestinian uprising continues to develop momentum. It is a measure of the concern generated in Washington by the rebellion that Secretary of State George Shultz is off to visit the region this week. Shultz's mission breaks with the conventional wisdom that no new initiative is feasible or desirable until after the November elections take place here and in Israel. The proposal he is carrying sidesteps the crucial issue of Palestinian self-determination, but it does put pressure on the Israelis to open up some political space by permitting local elections in the occupied territories, and it recognizes, pragmatically, that any U.S.-sanctioned peace process will require the participation of the Soviet Union.

Shultz's purpose is damage control, but an opportunity exists for a more dramatic move. Official protestations aside, Shultz has already met with a P.L.O. representative, *Al-Fajr* editor Hanna Siniora, and ought to be searching for a way to include Palestinian nationalists in an international conference. So why not move now for P.L.O. participation, explicitly conditioned on the same terms implied by Exodus II: coexistence.


IS JESSE'S RAINBOW FOR REAL?
Manning Marable
Robert L. Borosage
Anne Braden
Dave Dellinger
Connie Hogarth
Arthur Kinoy
Sabina Virgo
Mary Summers

BOURNE VS. KIRKPATRICK
Jefferson Morley

WORDS AND BULLETS
Lawrence Weschler

IZZY IN ATHENS
John Leonard


MALLED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

## O.K., BRUCE, THAT'S A WRAP—NEXT!

ANDREW KOPKIND

*Manchester, New Hampshire*

At 7:16 last Tuesday night, the New England Telephone Company declared Bruce Babbitt nonexistent. The networks were still hedging, but Directory Assistance had lost the listing for his headquarters, and trying an old entry in my Rolodex produced no answer after endless ringing. Candidate without a number, campaign without a name. Over at the Le Chateau bar and function rooms, a curious re-creation of French pastoral grandeur in depressing downtown Manchester, Babbitt's victory celebrants were delirious with enthusiasm. "Broooce, Broooce, Broooce," they chanted. It was not the only rock-and-roll allusion. Finger-snapping Babbitteens bopped and swayed to the Blues Brothers' blue-eyed version of "Soul Man." A cynical reporter summed up the scene. "Le Chateau is to chateaus what Babbitt's campaign is to campaigns," he cracked as the candidate approached the TV cameras for his ninety seconds of swan song. And what "Soul Man" is to soul.

A year and a half of intensive campaigning in an inhospitable environment, hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on rented cars, mixed media and fast food, and uncountable person-hours invested in phone-banking and leaflet-dropping ended in 5,568 votes, a poor sixth-place finish in the Democratic primary and a lot of unpaid bills. Nor had Babbitt's vaunted vision of Big Chill liberalism been developed on the hustings beyond his proposals for democracy in the workplace and a tax increase, the Democrats' favorite form of sadomasochism. The Washington insiders and media manipu-

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# EXCHANGE.

## MANDATE FOR LEADERSHIP

*Columbus, Ohio*

Occasionally, a political organizer or activist may participate within an electoral campaign but not comprehend the fundamental meaning or dynamics of the effort. Such seems to be the case with Mary Summers, who was one of Jesse Jackson's speechwriters during the 1984 campaign. The significance of the Rainbow Coalition that year, as well as currently, is that it represents a revolt against the Democratic Party; yet, due to the absence of a proportional, parliamentary political system within the United States, that protest had to occur inside the party. The Rainbow was a social protest movement against Reaganism and institutional racism in the 1980s, which had assumed a distinct electoral form. This was largely why so few black middle-class civil rights leaders and elected officials could initially embrace Jackson. Personal jealousy and old rivalries also had something to do with the black leaders' near-unanimous embrace of Walter Mondale, but basically, they failed to gauge the depths of opposition to the political status quo represented by both parties. Summers' recent review of books critiquing Jackson's 1984 campaign fails to register these insights [see Summers on ***Thunder in America***, by Bob Faw and Nancy Skelton; ***The Rainbow Challenge***, by Sheila D. Collins; ***The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon***, by Adolph L. Reed Jr.; and ***Straight From the Heart***, by the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Nov. 28, 1987].

More disturbing is the mean-spirited tone of her shallow evaluation of Sheila D. Collins's first-rate volume. Collins captures the social protest dimensions of the Jackson mobilization, which somehow escape both Adolph Reed and Summers, who also are both currently located at Yale University. Far from apologizing for Jackson, Collins presents a solid and accurate overview, marked by her sensitive understanding of the currents of black nationalism that influence many of Jackson's black supporters. Readers of ***The Nation*** should expect more than a hatchet job on progressive literature that examines black politics.

*Manning Marable*
*Ohio State University*

## SUMMERS' DISCONTENT

*Washington*

Mary Summers' sour commentary on the Jackson campaign suffers from inaccuracy and incoherence, distorting both present reality and past history. Summers' inaccuracy stems primarily from her assumption that the 1988 campaign is a rerun of the one she witnessed in 1984. But Jackson ran essentially a black campaign in 1984, aimed at rousing his people to assert their strength in the electoral process. In 1988 he is running a populist campaign, reaching out to working and poor Americans who have suffered most of the economic violence wrought by Reagan's class warfare.

Summers appears to have contracted ***scribus conjunctivitis***, a malady common among former speechwriters, characterized by the blind belief that if I ain't writing it, he can't be saying it. In fact, Jackson's 1988 message is far more radical and pointed than that of 1984. It is simple rubbish to suggest, as Summers does, that Jackson does not "attempt to distinguish himself from his fellow candidates in ways that would clarify a progressive agenda." In Rome, New York, I witnessed Jackson speaking to a crowd of over 1,500 primarily white workers and their families in support of a Machinists' strike. As he has in union halls and farm rallies across the country, he brought them to their feet with an eloquent message: about the global economy and the need for controls on multinationals; about global stagnation and the need for debt relief and aid to the Third World, while supporting labor rights at home and abroad; about our ruinous foreign policy and the need for deep cuts in the military budget; about the changing nature of the work force and of poverty and the need for a higher minimum wage, comparable worth, day care and comprehensive health care; about unemployment and the need for new public investment in rebuilding America; about the necessary unity between movements for racial and economic justice, for worker rights, gay rights and women's rights. In 1988, Jackson will reach millions of Americans with a stunning message that they ***will not hear elsewhere***. The media ignore this message—in part because of their unwillingness to report on any issues, in part because of their reluctance to treat Jackson seriously. The idiot TV debates, which allow only bumper sticker answers to bubble gum questions, compound the problem. Yet even in these debates, Jackson is consistently the only candidate who puts forward a progressive agenda.

To claim, as Summers does, that Michael Dukakis—the candidate who calls for increased funding for our "neglected conventional military forces," after the largest peacetime military buildup in history—and Paul Simon—who promises magically to increase spending, balance the budget and not raise taxes—are putting themselves "on the line" more than Jackson would be laughable if it were not so malicious. Summers even blames Jackson for "sabotag[ing] . . . a more rational discussion of U.S. policies toward . . . the Middle East." But why not salute Jackson's courage for calling for a peace process that includes the Palestine Liberation Organization as a necessary party and a Palestinian homeland as a necessary element to any accord? Compare that to Simon, Dukakis and Hart, who joined in the choice liberal hypocrisy of promising to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem while knowing that no responsible President could do any such thing.

If Summers' inaccuracy comes from her distance from the 1988 campaign, her incoherence derives from a gallant effort to find some way to praise ***The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon***, an unreadable book by Adolph Reed, one of her Yale mentors. One can admire Summers' loyalty in concluding that although this book of "rather dense and academic prose . . . fails to acknowledge the positive lessons" of the 1984 Jackson campaign, it is somehow a "major contribution" to the debate. But Reed's critique of Jackson is the obverse of Summers': Reed wants "routinized programmatic politics"; Summers upbraids Jackson for becoming a "mainstream candidate" and not leading a radical challenge to the status quo.

Even in Summers' gentle summary, Reed's analysis of Jackson is petty at best. Reed frets about the "leadership ratification" of a person who attracted over 70 percent of the black vote in 1984 (despite the opposition of many traditional black political leaders) and is likely to do as well in 1988 (despite confident predictions that blacks would not support Jackson a second time around). Reed complains that Jackson is not alone responsible for 2 million new voters. Of course he isn't, but it takes true perversity to discount the extraordinary effect that Jackson's candidacy had on political participation in the black community. Reed attacks "entrenched elites" in the black community who have a "narrow class agenda," but most of those very elites opposed Jackson in 1984, preferring the patronage that would come from a Mondale victory. And Jackson himself—as Summers admits—has always articulated a broader vision and agenda than such leaders.

Summers censures Jackson for not having a "strategy for winning or for achieving any concrete objectives." Nonsense. Jackson is surely the only candidate for President with even a glimmer of a long-term strategy. In 1984 he worked tirelessly to bring people of color into the political process. Every sensible political analyst acknowledges the fruits of his labor in the Democratic Senate victories in 1986 and the defeat of Judge Bork in 1987, when Southern senators chose not to offend what Senator Howell Heflin called "the new voter." In 1988, Jackson seeks to build a true rainbow around economic justice—adding white workers, farmers and poor people to people of color and of conscience. If he succeeds, he will transform the landscape of American politics. He is already close to showing that Jim Hightower and not Sam Nunn is the Southern leader of the future. Jackson has the potential of achieving more "concrete objectives" for progressive politics in defeat than his opponents can promise in victory. And if progressives would actually work with him rather than complain about his shortcomings, he might actually win the nomination and create a new Democratic Party.

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# EDITORIALS.

## Looking South

The word this week among the Democrats is that populism won in Iowa and liberalism won in New Hampshire. That gives an optimistic flush to otherwise uninspiring returns, but it also suggests the party is not ready to return to the vision of social centrism and the obsession with national security that old Democratic stalwarts and young Al Gore Jr. have been demanding.

Michael Dukakis, who won in New Hampshire, and Paul Simon, who came in third, actually speak to the same constituency of business and professional voters who have a vague sense that the system that supports them is not living up to its promises or potential. Richard Gephardt, who came in second, exploits a fear more urgent among working folks and the marginal middle class that the system is not as supportive as it seems, and the fault lies at least in part with America's economically hostile allies overseas. Jesse Jackson, who claimed with much truth that his message "won in New Hampshire" even though he came in fourth, has been making similar, and sharper, arguments for many years. It is all a far cry from the last election, when Walter Mondale was racing to the right and progressives were on the run.

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Nothing denotes the decline of Reaganism so clearly as the speeches and papers of the Democrats now bidding for the presidency.

The test of the depth of the candidates' commitment to the principles they have found so appealing in the Midwest and New England now comes as they head South. Will Dukakis oppose nuclear power on the banks of the Savannah River as loudly as he did by the Isles of Shoals? Will Simon support lesbian and gay rights in Atlanta as he did in Des Moines? Will Gephardt trash conglomerate agribusiness in the Cotton Belt as he did in the Corn Belt? And how strong will all of them be on anti-intervention, demilitarization and détente in the heartland of the patriotic culture?

The three league-leaders have historically been all over the lot on liberal issues and progressive positions; Gephardt has no corner on the flip-flop market. They will take principled stands only insofar as their constituents demand it, and respond favorably. Jackson's "message" now takes on added importance in the South, where he has a progressive constituency and the others do not. The shape of the campaign for Super Tuesday could well prefigure the form of the next Democratic administration.

# 'Our' Waldheim

The egregious Attorney General, Edwin Meese 3d, has decided that Kurt Waldheim is a war criminal and unfit for entry into the United States. But Meese's memory is short. In 1981 the Reagan Administration was straining every diplomatic muscle to win Waldheim an unprecedented third five-year term as Secretary General of the United Nations. The affair, barely noticed at the time, was doubly remarkable, for the United States undertook this enterprise in tandem with the Soviet Union. U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and her Soviet colleague, the charming Swarthmore-educated Oleg Troyanovsky, tirelessly stalked the corridors and worked the telephones in what turned out to be a quixotic venture.

By 1981 the Austrians, West Germans and French had all examined Waldheim's file in the German military archives in West Berlin. It is unthinkable that Washington's allies would not have passed on what they learned. The Russians were briefed about Waldheim's service with the notorious Army Group E as early as 1947. In other words, Washington and Moscow, or at least their intelligence services, knew that Waldheim had lied to conceal his service in the Balkans and had lied about his knowledge of Nazi atrocities there. This, of course, was no barrier to his employment at the U.N. Quite the contrary. It was a recommendation.

The Secretary General's job is not that important, but it has its occasional uses, when a phrase must be added to or deleted from a report; when a peacekeeping unit is put in place; when jobs are sought for political friends. Waldheim, so vulnerable, was the perfect Secretary General. He could not offend Washington or Moscow, and he did not.

Between them, Troyanovsky and Kirkpatrick forced the Security Council to a record sixteen ballots on Waldheim. But they could not overcome the Chinese veto. The Chinese did not object to Waldheim as a war criminal and may not have known of his Balkan past. But they insisted on a Third World figure as Secretary General, and Javier Pérez de Cuéllar of Peru was produced as a compromise.

Those new to the United Nations may be surprised at the Troyanovsky-Kirkpatrick collaboration. In fact, Moscow and Washington share an ill-disguised contempt for the windier resolutions over South Africa and Israel, the attention-getting boilerplate, and frequently work together when real interests are involved.

As for Waldheim, the international panel of historians has made clear what careful students already understood—that he took no risks to stop any war crimes but was not an initiator, either. In Israel, Waldheim could be tried for "being an accessory to war crimes," according to Yitzhak Modai, a former Justice Minister. Under the more sharply defined Nuremberg charter, however, which limits prosecution to "leaders, organizers, instigators and accomplices," Waldheim would probably escape.

It is fitting that Meese should brush aside such distinctions. He is a rogue Attorney General in the tradition of Harry Daugherty and John Mitchell, and probably saw Waldheim as a picked-over bone to be tossed at Jewish voters. The Waldheim affair, however, raises serious issues, among them whether the concept of war criminality is debased by loose usage. But none of this need trouble Meese or the Reagan crowd, whom no one will ever accuse of undue respect for legal niceties. BERNARD D. NOSSITER

*Bernard D. Nossiter covered the United Nations for* The New York Times *from 1979 to 1983.*

# Battle of Belgium

*Paris*

It is a battle royal, and it foreshadows many more like it in the struggle for the economic mastery of Europe. The prize is the Société Générale de Belgique, a large and history-laden enterprise. Its headquarters, in the heart of Brussels, lies between the seat of government and the royal palace; at the age of 166, it is older than the Belgian state and has often seemed more powerful. It has more than 1,200 subsidiaries, in sixty-seven countries, and reputedly a stake in one-third of the Belgian economy, including finance, fuel, engineering, chemicals and diamonds. Its consolidated assets were estimated to be $3.6 billion at the end of 1985.

Since the beginning of this year the value of its shares has more than doubled. What triggered the spectacular rise was a takeover bid by one of those latter-day *condottieri* for whom the frontiers of the nation-state are too confining, Carlo de Benedetti. Based in Italy, de Benedetti, in addition to being chair of Ing. C. Olivetti S.p.A., the office equipment group, has interests in engineering, foodstuffs (Buitoni) and publishing (Mondadori). But two-thirds of his business is now carried on abroad. In France, for instance, he has a

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stake in engine components as well as in *haute couture* (Yves St. Laurent), and it is through his French subsidiary Cerus that he made his bid for the holding company in Brussels.

The confrontation surfaced in the press on January 18. The previous evening, de Benedetti had told the governor of the Générale that he owned 18.6 percent of its voting shares and would make an open bid for another 15 percent, sufficient to give him veto power and probably effective control. The Générale tried to dilute his holding by issuing 12 million additional voting shares, a move later declared illegal by the Brussels Commercial Court.

Meanwhile, a rescue operation for this temple of Belgium's French-speaking establishment was being mounted, ironically, in the Flemish part of the country, by a consortium headed by the Gevaert N.V. holding company. In the hectic bidding that followed, a French holding company, the Compagnie Financière de Suez, emerged as the third major player. Last week, it looked as if Gevaert, holding 28 percent of the shares, and Suez, with 15 percent, might gain an absolute majority, but their alliance collapsed. Now de Benedetti, controlling close to 40 percent, seems the likely winner, although all sorts of deals are still possible. The only certainty is that the old Société Générale is no more.

Some lessons can be drawn from this unfinished battle. For Belgium it marks a clear shift in economic power from the once-dominant Walloon area to the more dynamic Flanders; the plebeian sharks are taking over from the patrician predators. It also reminds us that last October's financial collapse has rendered many firms vulnerable to takeovers. But since many professional raiders lost money in the debacle, takeover bids may now resume the more traditional form of the mighty swallowing the not-quite-so-strong. Third, with the dollar down, international investment is no longer one-way traffic from Wall Street to Europe. The abortive bid of Switzerland's Hoffmann-La Roche for U.S.-based Sterling Drug and the current rumor that British publisher Robert Maxwell is trying to take over Houghton Mifflin are the latest reminders of that trend. Which brings us to the crucial point. The main reason for Signor de Benedetti's move, and for recent maneuvers in the communications and insurance industries, presaging many battles to come, is that by 1992 the European Economic Community is supposed to be a truly unified market. When the Common Market was set up thirty years ago, the half-jocular comment was that only the Americans were treating it as a single unit. By now the European tycoons, too, seem to be thinking the same way and expanding their takeover activities accordingly.

There is still another moral to this story. Capitalism, its protagonists have been telling us, has become more humane, has grasped that "small is beautiful." In fact, it has simply discovered that sometimes smaller plants can be better managed and that farming out production need not diminish exploitation of workers. Meanwhile, financial concentration never stopped, and it has now reached a new stage in Europe. To borrow from Brecht, the era of small thieves is over. Robber barons are fighting it out, hoping that the winners will be big enough to take on their American and Japanese partners or rivals.

DANIEL SINGER

# Renamo's Victims

The desperate exodus of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Mozambique into neighboring countries has produced a health care disaster. Most dramatically, it has resulted in thousands of deaths, mainly among children, the innocent victims of the brutal civil war waged since the early 1980s by the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo), a South African–supported guerrilla force. Renamo was formed in 1976 by Rhodesian intelligence one year after Mozambique won its independence from the Portuguese. In 1980, after southern Rhodesia became majority-ruled Zimbabwe, Renamo lost an important source of support; but it found a new sponsor in South Africa's Department of Military Intelligence.

Renamo's principal objective is the destruction of Mozambique's already fragile infrastructure through a systematic campaign of destabilization. Its actions have ravaged the country's economic foundations. Currently, 42 percent of the Mozambican government budget is spent on defense, and losses resulting from the war are estimated to be between $5.5 billion and $6.5 billion for the period 1981 to 1985. Guerrilla massacres of civilians are frequent, causing profound disarray and terror. Last July, 424 Mozambicans, including many children, were killed in the village of Homoine.

A recent UNICEF study, "Children on the Front Line," says 484 health centers and posts have been destroyed in Mozambique since 1982 (42 percent of the nation's total), depriving more than 2 million people of access to health care. The number of war-related deaths among infants and children between 1980 and 1985 was around 230,000, mostly from malnutrition, untreated diseases and diarrhea. In addition, close to 4 million civilians—almost one-third of the country's population—have been uprooted.

More than 40,000 Mozambican refugees entered Malawi alone during November and December 1987. Relief organizations estimate that the total number in Malawi will reach 500,000 by the end of this year. On a recent visit to several Mozambican refugee camps in Malawi, I was able to determine the seriousness of the situation. Three critical factors are scarcity of food, severe overcrowding in the camps and frequent contamination of water supplies. Malnutrition is widespread, and infant mortality rates, already high for those living in Mozambique, have increased even more among the refugees—the result of malaria, epidemics of cholera and measles, and intestinal and respiratory infections.

The incoming refugee population has severely strained the Malawian health care system and put additional stress on hospitals near the camps, many of which were already barely adequate. Some, such as the district hospital at Chikwawa, are not only understaffed and sparsely equipped but also in desperate need of rehabilitation.

Dr. Dounia Bitar, a coordinator for Médecins sans frontières, an organization providing health care to refugees, estimated a monthly death rate of 8.4 per 10,000 persons in a total of five refugee camps. More than half those deaths occurred among children under 5 and, to a large extent, were

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due to preventable diseases. With the rainy season under way, the health situation is likely to deteriorate even further, since food and medicine distribution will become more difficult in vast areas of the country.

Although help from international organizations can be effective, it can only provide short-term solutions. As OXFAM says, "The real challenge is not just to bring the refugees much-needed relief but to eradicate the conflict causing this crisis, to create the conditions for countless thousands to return home to farm in peace." That objective will not be achieved unless South Africa stops its support of the Renamo guerrillas, whose actions perpetuate the conflict. Stronger pressure on the Pretoria regime is crucial, and not only as a matter of human rights and dignity. For the hundreds of thousands of Mozambicans fleeing in terror from their own land, it is a question of survival. DR. CÉSAR A. CHELALA

*Dr. César A. Chelala recently returned from Malawi, where he evaluated the health situation of Mozambican refugees for the United Nations.*

# Bruce

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

lators who had created successive Babbitt boomlets throughout the preprimary campaign could not, at last, raise Arizona to presidential heights. On Monday night, even before the traditional Dixville Notch returns came in at midnight (Babbitt got 0 of 7 Democratic votes), fifteen of his most fervent fans and journalistic heavies met for a farewell dinner with their man. Even to the end they protected him. Although all were convinced before the Tuesday vote that he was planning to drop out of the race that Thursday, they kept the news to themselves so as not to influence the results. One can imagine how fast they would report damaging political facts about a candidate they didn't love.

Babbitt out of the way, the Democratic field is beginning to assume some shape from the amoebic blob seen in debates and on the ground over the past many months. Michael Dukakis seems to have won the struggle for the white liberal soul of his party, and Richard Gephardt now faces only Albert Gore Jr. in the contest to carve out a comfortable nest in the Democratic center. Paul Simon never recovered from his disappointing runner-up finale in Iowa and, barring a major medical miracle (called a "Robertson" in 1988 campaign lingo), he is now irretrievably terminal. Simon's cash flow dried to a dribble two weeks ago, even as the New Hampshire polls were giving him an edge over Gephardt. On Sunday he summoned the media and placed a long-distance call of support to a Jewish refusenik in the Soviet Union, in hope of drumming up a little help from his old friends in the American Israel lobby. After all, similar grandstands worked for him in his senatorial campaign against Charles Percy in Illinois. This time, however, opportunism did not knock back, and Simon must continue on a shoestring, on the chance that a good showing in the next caucuses in the upper Midwest will help him get some delegates in his home state and give him bargaining power at the convention.

As spring comes to America, it is likely that Dukakis and Gephardt will be fighting for hegemony and Gore will be sniping from the young, white right. His also-ran finish here behind Jackson does not augur well for his efforts outside the South. "He seems to be having trouble getting votes in the white community," a Jackson adviser said mischievously on primary night. "The Reverend had the same problem earlier in his campaign. Maybe he could give Gore some pointers."

Jackson did neither better nor worse than expected (the only two categories that count in early primaries, where expectation is all), and he is well poised to make his mark next month in the South. Indications are that he will do so well in states such as Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi that the only interest will be in the white fight for second. His New Hampshire effort was, as usual, ridiculously underfunded and understaffed. Gore, for instance, spent his limit of $461,000 and made a big play for the youth vote, while Jackson spent $45,000 and, according to ABC's exit-poll breakdowns, beat Gephardt in three key columns: among voters under 50, college graduates and those who identified themselves as "liberal."

But flee, O Muse of Spin! The primaries this year were more valuable as winter carnivals than as political encounters. The halftime events were better than the games. There was Bob Dole beetling his brow (the right one) and savaging George Bush with a remark ("Tell him to stop lying about my record") that was sharper than a pencil jab to the neck. There was Pat Robertson donning sports garb and boxing two rounds with a Manchester gym operator in what must have been the media event of all time: a campaign stop attended by 200 TV types and print journalists and absolutely no voters. And there was Jesse Jackson on a turn-of-the-century train with wood stoves in the cars, pushing through snowdrifts on a whistle-stop tour of towns where he had no constituents, making speeches about economic justice and class solidarity to striking railroad workers who would not let the train pass into more vote-productive territory.

New Hampshire seems the perfect place for whistle-stop campaigning, and the networks played up the Currier & Ives iconography by filling their hours between returns and analyses with features about covered bridges and draft horses. But the old-fashioned state where Eisenhower beat Taft and Eugene McCarthy almost beat Lyndon Johnson now looks like just another section of the new American landscape, a hypermediated image of malls and airports and Ramada Inns, where candidates offer their "character" and no more than one-third of an issue for fear that the voters will turn to ***Jake and the Fatman*** or choose Fruit & Fibre over their submissions.

Most of the candidates did in fact end up in a mall in Manchester, for a "rally finale" on the last damp, dismal afternoon of the campaign. Although the Mall of New Hampshire is the second biggest in the state, it contains no

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single public space large enough to accommodate an audience of more than a few hundred people, so huge screens were placed among the Radio Shacks and Chess Kings and the candidates appeared by television projection to make their last pitch for votes. But were they really somewhere in the mall, or even in the state? Did they exist outside the media? "I know the word is overused, but this is truly Orwellian," a bemused *Boston Globe* reporter muttered as he roamed through the popcorn stands and chocolate chipperies. Gore and Kemp, Simon and Jackson loomed over the bubbling fountains and potted palms of the atrium. Babies screamed in their carriages. Suddenly two of the TV images materialized in human form, walking down the crowded corridors with their Secret Service bodyguards and traveling camera crews. At the corner of Kay-Bee Toys and Red Cross Shoes, Simon bumped into Kemp, and their campaigns touched for one magic moment of reality. Off to the side, Bruce Babbitt, or someone who looked like him, stood waiting for a knot of supporters to form. Nobody came. "Attention mall shoppers!" a disembodied voice intoned. "The event is now over." Babbitt put his hands in his pockets, looked around, and saw that it was.

# UNCIVIL LIBERTIES.

CALVIN TRILLIN

Finally, there's something in the news to dampen Jimmy the Greek's concern that every single aspect of American athletics is going to be taken over by blacks who have been bred to have long thighs: In a story about a black F.B.I. man who was tormented by his colleagues, one of the agents involved said to investigators, in passing, "The reason blacks can't swim as well as whites is because their bone density is thicker." Presumably, this means that members of the Olympic swim team can stop worrying about black competition. Whether it means that the rest of us can stop worrying about the F.B.I. is something else again.

I should acknowledge right away that I myself spent the first year of World War II believing that the Japanese had yellow blood. Of course, I was only 6 at the time. Still, I take some chance in mentioning it: If I ever have to interview George Bush, he'll almost certainly use it against me. ("How would you like it if I judged your entire record on the trade deficit by the fact you once thought that our principal economic competitors have yellow blood?") Racial discussions that would sound equally embarrassing now must have gone on in George Bush's school when he was 6, but, judging from his recent explanation of his role in the Iran/*contra* affair, I'm sure he asked the teacher for permission to leave the room just before each one of them began.

When I was a child I picked up all sorts of misinformation about Asian anatomy—some of it I'd just as soon not mention here, even now that we're being absolutely honest with each other—and I was also privy to some pretty startling theories about black people. I use the phrase "privy to" not just because it sounds fancy but because out behind the privy at Camp Osceola, the Kansas City–area Boy Scout camp, was where I heard a lot of these things.

I was told, for instance, that black people had thicker skulls than white people—making it easier for them to hoe cotton all day in the sun and less dangerous for them if they were hit in the head by a pitched ball. I was told again and again that if you had tiny half-moons on your fingernails—or maybe if you didn't have tiny half-moons on your fingernails, I've forgotten which—you had "black blood in you." The phrase was not meant literally. I want it on the record that by the time I was at Camp Osceola I knew that all blood was red.

When I was a reporter in the South in the early 1960s, some white people who were trying to explain why it wouldn't be a good idea to allow black people to vote let me in on theories that even the savants at Camp Osceola hadn't known. Any number of times, for instance, I was told that black people could understand specific instructions but couldn't deal with anything abstract. As it happens, I've always had trouble grasping anything abstract myself—even something no more abstract than that theory. "What do you mean?" I said to the first person who told it to me. "Give me an example."

"An example?" he said.

"Yeah, an example," I said. "Something specific."

By that time, of course, I was old enough to dismiss all such yard-sale anthropology as what I'd come to think of as "yellow-blood stuff." Now, years later, we're told that there are F.B.I. agents who still believe the race theories they heard out behind the privy at Boy Scout camp—not to speak of F.B.I. field-office directors who think that agents who do things like deface the family pictures of one of their fellow agents are having some good clean fun. I can imagine one of the Osceola theorists explaining that one: "Black people don't mind having their families insulted, because they're lacking this whatzis we've got in a certain part of the brain."

All this was revealed the same week we found out that the F.B.I. spent four years collecting information on people like nuns and trade unionists who oppose the Administration's policies in Central America.

I find myself still looking for some specifics that my nonabstract mind can grasp. What, specifically, justified four years of spying on people who were breaking no laws? What, specifically, is so much fun about insulting someone's children? These days, citizens can ask such specific questions about the F.B.I. without fear, we're assured, because the agency has been reformed. Unless it hasn't. In that case, maybe I can expect an F.B.I. agent to come around some night to inspect my fingernails.

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# BEAT THE DEVIL.

## Miami Vice

Of all the newspaper editorials on *contra* aid in the run-up to the House vote on February 3, few were more violent in tone and disdainful of truth than the one in *The Miami Herald* for January 19. Under the heading "Sandinistas' sham," it opened with the inaccurate charge that Nicaragua was dragging its feet on compliance with the "Arias Peace Plan"; implied falsely that blanket amnesty and direct talks with the *contras* were part of the plan; repeated the canard, now abandoned by most of the press, that Nicaragua was envisaging a 600,000-man army; and made a ludicrous claim for Salvadoran President Duarte's "courageous compliance with the peace-plan deadlines." The *contras*, the editorial stated, were the sole "instrument" available for achieving democracy in Nicaragua; therefore, "continued U.S. military aid . . . is essential to permit the contras to sever the Sandinistas' Marxist tentacles one by one."

With this declaration *The Herald* shifted its stance from the one it had maintained in previous years, against military aid to the *contras*. Five days later *Miami Herald* editor Jim Hampton discussed the editorial shift in a signed column, proclaiming it to have been the "second-most-significant reversal of policy" in his ten years as editor. (The most significant was advocacy of the death penalty for peculiarly dreadful murders.) He reiterated his arguments, which sounded even more specious than they had the first time, and said that a majority of the editorial board had favored his stand. Shortly after this *The Herald* ran some of the protests and commendations from its readership, all of them seeing the editorial as a benchmark.

It is not as though *The Herald* has been a wellspring of reason on Latin America. As we shall see, its coverage of Cuba has long echoed the deranged sentiments of the Cuban exile community. But its reporting from Nicaragua had not been as actively malign as that of, say, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, and on the Iran/*contra* scandal Alfonso Chardy and other reporters have supplied many of the stories most damaging to the Reagan Administration. Its editorial opposition to military aid had been a ray of enlightenment amid the toxic rhetorical fog enveloping most discussion in Florida of Latin American affairs. So the January 19 editorial was a significant political event, and one deeply gratifying to many in the Hispanic-American community in Dade County.

### 'We Will Not Be Used'

Indeed some who read that editorial on January 19 found their minds being drawn back to an advertisement that appeared in *The Herald* on October 19, 1987. Headed "The Cuban-American Community and The Miami Herald" it was paid for by the directors and trustees of the Cuban American National Foundation. "It's a sad day for American journalism," the ad began, "when a newspaper loses the trust and confidence of a large segment of its readership. Yet, that is what has happened in Miami. After years of fragile relations, the Cuban-American community has sorrowfully accepted the fact that The Miami Herald's only interest in Cuban Americans is economic. We are simply a market to be penetrated. The Herald does not address our hopes, our beliefs, our fears, our aspirations. It dismisses our values and demeans our institutions."

Farther down, there was a specific threat. The advertisement pointed out the economic power of the Hispanic community, where now exist "over 20,000 Cuban-American businesses including numerous banks" and remarked, "Now, after years of confrontation, the paper needs our economic power. But we have a message for it. We will not be used." It concluded with some specific avenues *The Herald* should pursue in the path to improvement.

The Cuban American National Foundation, with offices in both Miami and Washington, is one of the most active anticommunist Cuban outfits in the United States. Founded in 1981 it has become increasingly influential as a lobbying organization, eagerly courted by such presidential candidates as Robert Dole, George Bush and Pat Robertson. Its former director, José Sorzano, was successfully pushed into a high post at the National Security Council last year by Jeane Kirkpatrick and other ultraconservative sponsors. The foundation's declaration of war against *The Herald* was therefore profoundly political and undoubtedly of concern to the directors of the Knight-Ridder chain, which owns *The Herald*, and to Richard Capen, *The Herald*'s publisher, who imposed an endorsement for Reagan on the editorial board in 1984.

The advertisement's observation that *The Herald* "needs our economic power" was not wide of the mark. *The Herald* is certainly the most important newspaper in Florida, but it has been losing ground for years, as a long article in *The Herald* for February 2 made clear. In 1960, 79 percent of Dade County households received the paper; today only 38.5 percent do. Total daily sales are off by 4.5 percent since 1985, and circulation in *The Herald*'s Dade County base has been off slightly in the past three years. The paper's efforts to follow its Anglo readers to Broward County and points north have been blocked. Meanwhile, the Spanish-language media have enjoyed tremendous growth.

The advertisement angered many at the paper, as well as some readers. "Our concern," wrote three professors from the department of communication at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton in a forceful letter that was not published, "is that alternative views of Cuba are already scarcely available to readers of the Herald, and that in the future they would be ignored altogether if the Cuban American National Foundation had its way." The professors are among a group that thinks the editorial shift on military aid to the *contras* was *The Herald*'s answer to the October 19 advertisement, a brisk wag of the white flag.

### History and Hysteria

But how important is one editorial shift in a newspaper in a state where sixteen out of the nineteen-person Congressional delegation have favored aid to the *contras*? In my

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view it is ominous in terms of the texture of national political debate. The precedent here is Cuba and the way *The Herald* has addressed itself to this, the most contentious of all issues in southern Florida. Its failure to offer intelligent coverage of Cuba has reflected a larger failure on this subject in the U.S. press.

For an entire generation all reporting and commentary on a socialist experiment ninety miles from the U.S. mainland have been disfigured by one of the most remarkable bouts of hysteria in the history of journalism. This disfigurement has assisted in a general incomprehension or misrepresentation of forces for change in Latin America. The taproot for this epic of distortion has been the exile Cuban community in southern Florida, nourishing since the days of Eisenhower and Kennedy a culture of corrupt reaction and often homicidal intolerance, a history defined at its most baneful by Felix Rodríguez and Luis Posada Carriles at the other end of Vice President Bush's phone line.

*The Herald* long since capitulated to this fanaticism on the matter of Cuba. As a *Herald* reader I have been familiar with its poor coverage of that country, and before me now lies an interesting draft report from Global Options, a think tank in San Francisco. The report, titled "Tropical Gulag," examines the construction of cold war images of Cuba in the United States, taking 1986 as a sample year. Of the total coverage examined in the report 45.9 percent appeared in *The Herald*. It charts a familiar course: triumphant denunciations of Cuba's "crippled economy," of a beleaguered Castro desperate for normalization and economic rescue by the United States, of a charnel house of human rights abuses, of a vassal state saved from ruin only by Moscow gold.

Cuba is far from perfect, a condition it shares with every other country in the world, but it has a number of uncontested accomplishments. To cite a scarcely friendly source, a 1982 U.S. Commerce Department report to Congress stated, "[The] Cuban revolution has managed social achievements, especially in education and health, that are highly respected in the Third World." The department cited a "highly equitable income distribution" that has virtually wiped out malnutrition, a health care system that rivals some industrialized countries, the virtual elimination of illiteracy and a "highly developed multilateral education system."

Efforts to end racial inequality—about 35 percent of Cuba's population is black or mulatto—have been met with a success that should be instructive to the leaders of Miami and to its black underclass. It was Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, Secretary to Cuba's Catholic Conference of Bishops, who said in 1986 that "most Cubans, even many who are not converted Marxist-Leninists, support Castro and some degree of socialism." In his *Trade, Debt and the Cuban Economy* (1987), Richard Turits wrote: "Soviet subvention of the economy is not simply a dole that underwrites economic stagnation. . . . It would be wrong to discount . . . Cuba's successful program of economic development, and effective management of the debt without traditional austerity measures." Turits points out that "on a per capita basis, Israel received in cash transfers in 1985 2.5 times the estimated average yearly trade subsidies that the USSR provides to Cuba." Per capita, Puerto Rico receives about six times the aid from the United States that Cuba gets from the Soviet Union. It has lost about one-third of its population to the United States since the 1950s, while 25 percent of those seeking work in Puerto Rico are unemployed and half the people live on food stamps and public assistance. It would be interesting to read some discussion of these contrasting track records in *The Herald* or any other major U.S. newspaper, or for that matter in *The Nation*.

"By all accounts," the three professors from Boca Raton wrote in their unpublished letter, "more than 1 million Cubans—including trained militia reserves—bear arms, and tens of thousands have combat experience from abroad. Yet despite the exile community's extensive intelligence contacts inside Cuba, we hear of no significant revolt. At the same time, Cuba sends many thousands of health, education and technical workers abroad annually to the poorer countries of the world. If home is such a tyranny, why don't we hear of significant defections?"

**The Price of Surrender**

Colleagues speak of Jim Hampton as a decent fellow who has long been under enormous pressure from the business side of the paper to address himself to the "concerns"—often shorthand for purblind prejudices—of the Cuban-American community. I telephoned him to discuss his editorial and other matters described above, but he'd not called back by the time this column went to press. I hope he and his consenting majority on the editorial board will go to Nicaragua some day soon and explain to little Kenia Rodríguez why they favor the men who blew her feet off, machine-gunned another family hiding in a concrete sewer pipe and killed three more children with a land mine two days after the *contra* vote, just before welshing on a scheduled peace meeting with the Nicaraguan government. They could perhaps outline the ever-elusive *contra* vision of "reform."

Of course Hampton would certainly deny any link between the agenda of the Cuban-Americans and his editorial, and there's no need to speculate whether his arm was twisted by the publisher. Other major papers in the Knight-Ridder chain opposed *contra* aid, which is an index of Hampton's submission to the sway of his own immediate environment, though he would probably dignify it as a serious intellectual conversion.

If he wants to get an idea of principled coverage of a contentious issue, infuriating to an influential segment of readers, he should study the reporting and editorials of the *Los Angeles Times* on Israel and the uprising in the occupied territories. Part of the responsibility for that situation lies with the U.S. newspapers passing the buck for a generation. It's a sad irony that *The Herald* should have decided to stoke the fires of unreason about Nicaragua only days before the House of Representatives—perhaps momentarily—came to its senses.

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# BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN
JEFFERSON MORLEY

## ■ Congress Setting Meese Trap?

Rumblings have finally begun in the House Judiciary Committee: Something must be done about Edwin Meese. " 'Impeachment' is a very big word," said one Congressional source, but it's a word that's been used, albeit cautiously, ever since news of the Iraqi pipeline scandal broke. Short of that, lawmakers are talking about a Congressional boycott of Meese—members might not attend hearings at which he testifies—and a House petition calling for his resignation.

This plotting against Meese, so late in the game, is fueled by some members' desire to reverse "how accepting we've become of ethical abuses" under Reagan, the source noted. One goal of the anti-Meese forces is to revive the notion that a criminal indictment is not a prerequisite for impeachment. Indeed, a 1974 Judiciary Committee report states that grounds for impeachment include "undermining the integrity of office," "abuse of governmental process" and "adverse impact on the system of government."

The final call on impeachment will likely rest with Peter Rodino, chair of the House committee. Rodino, who made his name during the Nixon impeachment proceedings, was disappointing last year when he questioned the Attorney General about his role in the Iran/*contra* scandal. Rodino came across as an old boxer who could remember what punches to throw but whose reflexes were starting to go. Impeachment hearings could provide a rematch.

## ■ Real Humanitarian Aid

Congressional Democrats casting around for a truly humanitarian aid package might enlist Drs. William Burman and Hansjurg Holdener. Burman and Holdener, both surgeons, are suggesting that Congress spend $20 million to treat the wounded in Nicaragua—*contras*, Sandinistas and civilians alike. They want to build or upgrade a dozen airstrips, which would be linked to a high-tech trauma surgery center in the town of La Trinidad. This type of humanitarian aid, unlike that proposed by Reagan and some Democrats over the years, is not devised to keep the war going.

On Capitol Hill the main question about the *contra* aid package now being formulated by the Democrats is whether it will again give the C.I.A. responsibility for disbursement, thus making a mockery of the very idea of "humanitarian" aid. Burman says his plan would specifically bypass the C.I.A., under whose supervision the *contras* have systematically attacked rural health care facilities. The two doctors, with assistance from the Friends Service Committee on National Legislation, have given their plan to Democratic leaders. An aide to Speaker Jim Wright says it is being seriously considered for the alternative humanitarian aid package, and a decision will be made by the beginning of March.

## ■ Coming Soon: More Secret F.B.I. Files

You haven't heard the last of the F.B.I.'s spying campaign against the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. Last month the Center for Constitutional Rights made public 1,320 pages of F.B.I. records documenting the surveillance of CISPES, which it obtained from the Bureau under the Freedom of Information Act. That represented only one-third of the 3,756 pages the F.B.I. said exist in its Washington headquarters files. C.C.R. is appealing for the release of those documents.

Files on CISPES kept by the regional field offices of the F.B.I. are expected soon. On March 1 the F.B.I. is scheduled to hand over records from the Dallas office. Recall that Frank Varelli, who had infiltrated the Dallas CISPES chapter, testified in Congress last year that F.B.I. agents had burglarized the group's offices in Dallas and Washington. Meanwhile, C.C.R. lawyers are encouraging activists and other organizations to file requests for their F.B.I. files, and to report any funny business—break-ins, Customs harassment, I.R.S. audits—to the Movement Support Network at (212) 614-6422.

## ■ CISPES Is Not Alone

Revelations about the F.B.I. and CISPES sent us back to transcripts of last year's Senate hearings on the nomination of William Webster as Director of Central Intelligence. In his nine years as F.B.I. chief, Webster declared, "there [had] not been one single successfully maintained claim of a violation of a constitutional right by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation." Note the sly use of the words "successfully maintained claim."

At the end of the hearings' second day Senator William Cohen, a Maine Republican, asked Webster if the F.B.I. would put on file the names of U.S. citizens who attended a lecture, forum or exchange with a Soviet representative or delegation. The F.B.I., Webster replied, "probably would identify the leaders" and "principal participants." Agents would then determine whether to cross-reference those names—that is, plunk them into their own files. What are the guidelines for cross-referencing? Cohen asked. "The guidelines are not adequately clear," Webster said.

Cohen continued. What if a peace group—he cited Peace Links as an example—held an event with a Soviet delegate? Would that end up in an F.B.I. file? Webster declined to tackle that one in public. "I'm so often accompanied by spectators who have an interest in what I have to say about these things, and I really would rather put that one off if I could," he said. Cohen acquiesced, thus ending the discussion of F.B.I. spying on peace groups.

## ■ Painting the Town Political

In the Iran/*contra* summer of 1987 Robbie Conal, a painter from Los Angeles, plastered L.A., Washington, New York and several other cities with a series of striking black-and-white political posters. Perhaps the best known was a rendering of Oliver North, titled "Speak"; another, "Women With Teeth," featured the horrifying smiling quartet of Jeane Kirkpatrick, Joan Rivers, Nancy Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. Conal's next work, due in cities across the country, will be a double-size, multicolored portrait of a famous religious couple in American political life.

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# ARTICLES.

INTELLECTUALS AND EMPIRE

# Randolph, Jeane And the *Contras*

JEFFERSON MORLEY

Randolph Bourne and Jeane Kirkpatrick would have eyed each other with fine contempt. He was a hunchbacked journalist who wrote for small magazines like *The New Republic*, *The Dial* and *Seven Arts* in the early twentieth century. She is the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and perhaps the future Secretary of State in, say, the Dole Administration. He was a pacifist who opposed U.S. intervention in World War I. She is a flamboyant polemicist who has consistently supported overthrowing the Sandinista government of Nicaragua in the 1980s. Each would have regarded the other as the sordid embodiment of everything that was (and is) wrong with the American mind.

What Bourne and Kirkpatrick share is an obsession with the question of empire. The question is very much alive today. Voters worry about their declining standard of living and wonder why the Japanese are kicking our economic butt. Immigrants are changing the character of our cities. Pundits discuss books with titles like *Mortal Splendor*, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* and *America Invulnerable*. Congress worries about allies like Spain, the Philippines and Panama, which want to evict our military bases.

Perhaps the most important emerging theme of the 1988 presidential campaign is: Is America's network of worldwide influence good for Americans? The question has two parts: How can the United States compete in the world economy so as to provide a decent standard of living for all its people? And how should the people of the United States respond to political change in the Third World? The bitter Nicaragua debate is really about this second question. Bourne and Kirkpatrick are discussing it across seven decades.

Bourne's forgotten views came to mind during a standing-room-only press conference sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute on February 1, just two days before the House of Representatives voted down *contra* aid. Bourne's essay "The War and the Intellectuals," written in 1917, took intellectuals to task for aligning themselves too closely with the state. It anticipates with uncanny prescience the *contra* war and its intellectual partisans like Kirkpatrick.

Kirkpatrick, cast in the unlikely role of "moderator," opened the A.E.I. proceedings on a scholastic-pietistic note. She invoked a medieval scholar, John of Salisbury, to justify "full-scale" war against tyranny and thus U.S. sponsorship of the *contras*. Bourne would have been as astonished in 1988 as he was in 1917 at the sight of an intellectual "gently guiding a nation through sheer force of ideas into what other nations enter only through predatory craft or populist hysteria or military madness."

The United States, Kirkpatrick said, was aiding the *contras* only out of self-defense and idealism. "Both U.S. national security and democracy in Central America were and should be integral goals of U.S. policy, partly because democracy is good in itself and partly because democracy is integrally associated with peace."

Bourne wondered seventy years ago, "What shall we do with leaders who tell us that we go to war in moral spotlessness, or who make 'democracy' synonymous with a republican form of government?" His answer was to try to understand what motivated those who wanted to export "democracy" and why they had prevailed.

Bourne recognized how empire fulfills unique needs for elite opinion-makers:

> Never having felt responsibility for labor wars and oppressed masses and excluded races at home, they had a large fund of idle emotional capital to invest in the oppressed nationalities and ravaged villages of Europe [today, read Nicaragua]. Hearts that had felt only ugly contempt for democratic strivings at home beat in tune with the struggle for freedom abroad. All this was natural but it tended to overemphasize our responsibility.

Bourne noted that it led to "a gradual working up of the conviction that we were ordained as a nation to lead all erring brothers toward the light of liberty and democracy."

This conviction has no more forceful partisan than Kirkpatrick. As she recently declared in *The Washington Post*: "The United States has an irrevocable interest in the struggle for freedom everywhere."

Such ideals, Bourne observed, did not stir the democratic masses into war fever—then or now. "It must never be forgotten," Bourne noted, speaking of World War I, "that in every community it was the least liberal and least democratic elements among whom the preparedness and later the war sentiment was found. . . . The farmers were apathetic, the small business men and workingmen are still apathetic towards the war."

This, of course, is as true of the conflict in Nicaragua as it was of World War I: The original impetus for the *contra* war came from the corrupt and discredited followers of Anastasio Somoza, and the mass of the U.S. populace is still apathetic about or opposed to support for the *contra* cause.

Bourne would have been surprised that Congress balked at supporting the *contras*. "Even in those countries where the business of declaring war is theoretically in the hands of representatives of the people," he wrote in 1917, "no legislature has ever been known to decline the request of an Executive, which has conducted all foreign affairs in utter privacy and irresponsibility, that it order the nation into battle."

Bourne was wrong about the House of Representatives on this particular *contra* vote, but his essential point remains: When the executive pursues imperial solutions, justified by the noblest rhetoric, the conduct of foreign policy will inevitably descend into "utter privacy and irresponsibility." Bourne, needless to say, would not have been surprised by the Iran/*contra* scandal.

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The next President of the United States is going to face difficult decisions about how—not whether—to retrench the American empire. In a remarkable peroration, Kirkpatrick warned that any such efforts in Central America would be bitterly resisted.

"These facts are on the table; the facts about this vote are very clear," she concluded. "If aid is denied to the resistance forces in Nicaragua, and all the consequences which we fear follow and the peace process is abandoned—which I think will happen, personally—then I believe the responsibility for that will be clear and the internal struggle in the United States will be embittered for a very long time. I think we will be in for a terrible political fight." Dreams of empire die hard.

Bourne believed there was an alternative to imperial idealism. America's greatness, he believed, originated not in its role as a world power but in its ethnic diversity, its cultural tolerance, its educational system and its young people.

"There is a personal and social idealism in America which is out of reach of the most skillful and ardent appeals of the older order, an idealism that cannot be hurt by the taunts of cowardice and slacking or kindled by the slogans of capitalistic democracy," Bourne wrote in 1917.

In 1988 the skillful and ardent appeals of a Kirkpatrick constitute the defense of empire. Whether the alternative idealism of a Bourne will be summoned and defined by a presidential candidate or by a social movement is perhaps the central question of the 1988 campaign. □


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## *Rethinking* MARXISM

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*Jack Amariglio, Managing Editor*

a journal of political economy and social analysis


WORDS AND BULLETS

# The De-Meaning of Humanitarian Aid

LAWRENCE WESCHLER

On February 4 an unusually discordant headline leaped out at readers of *The Washington Post*'s early edition: "Combat Performance of Contras Said to Improve." Discordant, in part, because it appeared the day *after* the House vote repudiating the President's latest request for *contra* aid, so that the sort of special pleading represented by the headline (even in a newspaper that had editorialized a few days earlier in favor of that aid) seemed moot, irrelevant, a day late and a dollar short. But the truly discordant effect was more a result of the large photograph that accompanied the article, illustrating and amplifying its message. That image—one of startling, almost Velázquez-like immediacy—portrayed the aftermath of a *contra* attack on the hamlet of La Vigia Sur: a doleful old man holding aside the lid of a tiny wood coffin to reveal the lovingly swathed corpse of an infant. Improved combat performance, indeed.

The dissonance of headline and photo was so jarring that a friend of mine ended up calling the foreign desk at *The Post* to find out how such a thing could have happened. He was told that the headline had been an inadvertent error, that it had only graced early editions of the paper and had been corrected in later ones. And yet, as the day went on, I began to realize that the haunting power of the headline grew out of the dissonance of truth, not error. Yes, the combat performance of the *contras* has been improving, and that is precisely reflected in the growing number of infant caskets. Not because the *contras* in some ghoulish manner specifically target infant children in their raids (that's more frequently the method of choice with the militaries of such "democratic" U.S. allies as El Salvador and Guatemala) but because they specifically target, for example, farming cooperatives, which are where infant children live. *That's their strategy*—that's what our tax dollars have been going to underwrite: The *contras* mean to destabilize Nicaragua's economy by disrupting its primary institutions, such as the farms that feed its cities or the coffee cooperatives that generate its desperately needed hard currency.

Seven civilians were killed in the incident described in the *Post* dispatch, including three women and three children. Another seventeen, including a 4-month-old infant, were killed a few days later near Quilalí, when a series of mines detonated under a bus. And a few days after that, another nine were killed when a grenade was hurled into a memorial march for the bus victims. (Stephen Kinzer's piece on the bus mining was a classic instance of the *New York Times*/Kinzer

*Lawrence Weschler is a staff writer at* The New Yorker. *His collection,* Shapinsky's Karma, Boggs's Bills, *will be published by North Point Press in June.*

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style. It went on for three paragraphs before first mentioning the *contras* and another five before using the phrase "American-made Claymore mines." A casual reader might have been forgiven for imagining that the mines had just up and attacked the bus on their own. Mistakes were made.)

But if that *Post* headline the morning after the House vote had initially seemed discordant owing to its superfluousness, this seemed less and less obviously the case as time went by. "Responsible" House Democratic leaders have been all over the media in the days since the vote, assuring reporters that they will not abandon the *contras*, that they are busily putting together a package of "humanitarian, nonlethal assistance." Republicans, for their part, have been just as busy promising that they will try to stretch the parameters of the terms "humanitarian" and "nonlethal" as wide as possible. (Up to this point those marvelously elastic terms have allowed for the inclusion of such items as helicopters, jeeps, trucks, radar, communications equipment and air drops of food, clothing and supplies, which just might happen to include, alongside all that, guns and ammunition.)

We can already foresee the contours of the coming debate. How long will it be before somebody points out—accurately—that guns don't kill people, bullets do? And in fact, not all bullets. Most bullets miss: A thousand bullets probably miss for every one that hits. And, actually, it's not the *whole* bullet that kills, just the tip. So what are we actually talking about in terms of specifically *lethal* aid? Maybe just the tips of twenty or thirty bullets a day. What's that? At the outside, $2, $5, $10 a day? Everything else is nonlethal, nonmilitary—indeed, *humanitarian.* Through such tortured logic will members of Congress be attempting to sustain that honest appropriation of responsibility that has characterized every *contra* aid vote up to this point.

But if what's at stake in Nicaragua is the fate of democracy in our hemisphere, surely one of the places that that democracy is most in contest is in our own capital. And what is most immediately at stake there is the fate of democratic language, the tangible accountability and applicability of words. Words do have meanings, and they must sustain those meanings or else all is lost. In this case, the term "humanitarian" has a very specific meaning. A whole series of Geneva Conventions, to which our country has been a proud signatory, have set the rules for what may and may not constitute "humanitarian assistance" in the context of a war, even a "noninternational war." These rules are wide-ranging and fairly complex, but they all have one thing in common. For aid to be deemed humanitarian, it must be made equally available to all the parties in a conflict. This is a fairly obvious point: When the Ethiopian regime, for instance, attempts to disrupt humanitarian food shipments from reaching famished sectors in rebellious Eritrea and instead tries to hoard all such aid for its own people, the world community is appalled, and rightly so. But this likewise seems an obvious place to begin the reclamation of democratic language in our own country. If the *contras* deserve humanitarian assistance—food, clothing, shelter—then so, certainly, do the villagers in La Vigia Sur and Quilalí and all the other hamlets and cooperatives that our tax dollars have, over the past several years, laid to ruin. □

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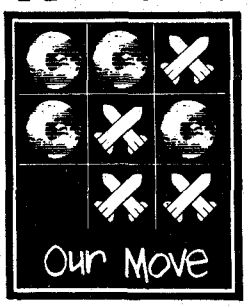

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AIR DEFENSE INITIATIVE

# Sneaking Canada Into S.D.I.

DAVID KATTENBURG

*Hamilton, Ontario*

If U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear weapons are withdrawn from Europe, in accordance with the recent I.N.F. agreement, say Pentagon officials and their hired hands in the intellectual community, the superpowers will have no choice but to start threatening each other across new lines of scrimmage elsewhere in the world. One likely area of rising confrontation, they say, will be the Arctic. Pershing 2s, SS-20s and ground-launched cruise missiles scheduled for dismantling are already being compensated for, on Pentagon blackboards, by cruise-armed bombers and submarines operating just north of Canada.

Canadians, in other words, have something else to worry about. Washington and Ottawa are now secretly collaborating on a Star Wars–type defense system under a program called the Air Defense Initiative. A.D.I. is developing technologies to knock down Soviet air- and sea-launched cruise missiles in Canada's northern airspace. Canada's growing involvement in A.D.I.—and ultimately the Strategic Defense Initiative—has received little publicity here, and officials continue their antinuclear posturing.

Last spring, for example, Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney received editorial praise for warning a gathering of NATO officials in Quebec City that Star Wars technology should not be used to attack the Russians. "Extreme care must be taken," said the lantern-jawed statesman, "to ensure that [strategic] defenses are not integrated with existing forces in such a way as to create fears of a first strike." These remarks were particularly hypocritical. Canada operates an air defense network for the United States in the Arctic, complete with a string of transmitters to guide Pentagon bombers toward the Soviet Union. Ottawa allows these bombers—B-52s and F-111s, although Washington wants the new B-1 included in the deal—to simulate nuclear strikes and test cruise missiles up here on a year-round basis. The U.S. Air Force currently wants to train its bomber pilots to fly at low altitudes through five corridors in Canadian airspace, despite protests from environmentalists and local government officials.

Down below, under the surface of the Arctic Ocean, Ottawa lets the U.S. Navy engage in offensive exercises too. For years American attack submarines have been traversing the Canadian Arctic on their way toward the North Pole and Soviet sanctuarial waters. Rather than oppose this, last June the Canadian Minister of National Defense, Perrin Beatty, announced Canada's intent to procure at least ten nuclear-powered attack submarines of its own. Some of these would be deployed under the Arctic ice, so that Ottawa can observe the mounting activity up close. Canada's submarines would "deter hostile or potentially hostile intrusions" by the Russians in response to U.S. incursions, says the Defense Minister's June policy white paper.

Now, is not this the sort of offense-defense mixture Mulroney cautions the Western alliance to eschew? Apparently not. The Pentagon, Mulroney and his military colleagues argue, is not preparing to attack the Soviet Union through Canadian airspace, and so the Russians should have nothing to fear. Furthermore, the purpose of allied submarine operations in the Arctic is defensive—to stop Soviet boats from entering the Atlantic and interfering with NATO shipping lanes, not to bottle up and destroy Soviet strategic submarines in their own home ports. In any case, the argument concludes, the Kremlin would always be free to retaliate somehow, since North American air defenses are passive. They are designed to warn the Pentagon of a Soviet sneak attack, rather than to mop up any retaliatory force in the wake of a U.S. first strike.

The Russians may have reason to fear the second of these two scenarios, however, if current discussions between Ottawa and the Pentagon bear fruit. The subject of these virtually secret discussions is the aforementioned Air Defense Initiative. A.D.I. and S.D.I. have more in common than two letters of the alphabet. Both programs are developing technologies for parrying a Soviet attack. While S.D.I. deals with the threat of a ballistic missile attack through space, A.D.I. is looking at ways to defend against bombers and cruise missiles approaching North America through the atmosphere. A.D.I. will provide a "credible complement" to Star Wars, says Lawrence Woodruff, U.S. Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces. To be effective, A.D.I. surveillance sensors and weapons will have to operate in Canada. "Canada has got to be involved," says one of Ottawa's most senior military scientists. "We just can't be out of this." To insure that it isn't, the Canadian government has submitted a cooperative A.D.I. agreement to the Pentagon to "formalize Canadian participation in the A.D.I. program." This draft agreement, now under negotiation, will "establish the mechanisms for insuring joint participation in the research, technology development and formulation of operational concepts" and "permit the industries of both countries to compete on an equal basis for participation in the research, development and production aspects of A.D.I."

Much—although not all—of the Canadian government's desire to cooperate with the Americans on A.D.I. stems from its perceived obligation under the thirty-year-old NORAD pact to defend the United States against attack from the north. Ottawa also realizes that the Pentagon will proceed with A.D.I. regardless of what Canada does. By involving itself willingly in A.D.I. from the outset, the Canadian government hopes to safeguard its sovereignty by participating in research related to the surveillance of its own territory "on a sort of equal footing," an official from the Department of External Affairs explains.

*David Kattenburg is a freelance writer and radio broadcaster living in Hamilton, Ontario.*

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Canadian officials also see A.D.I. as a good mechanism for making money. The Pentagon plans to spend about $1 billion on A.D.I. research over the next five years. In exchange for a piece of the pie, the Mulroney government now appears willing to scrap its declared policy regarding formal involvement in strategic defense research.

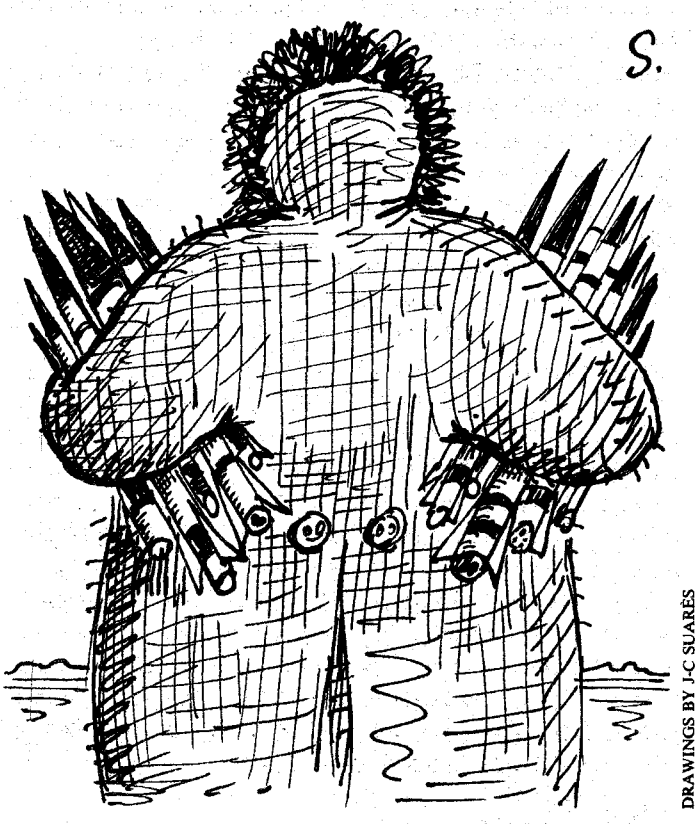
Personally mandated by President Reagan in July 1985, A.D.I. has been set on a parallel course with S.D.I., so that decisions for simultaneous deployment of space and atmospheric defenses can be made by the mid-1990s. "The Air Defense Initiative is to complement SDI in developing technologies for a strategic defense system," an A.D.I. briefing document explains. Three sets of A.D.I. systems are being planned. The first of these would scan the North American perimeter for Soviet bombers and terrain-hugging cruise missiles. The second would provide communication links and battle computing and be capable of functioning in the midst of a nuclear war. Weapon systems would constitute the third and most crucial component of an A.D.I. defense network. Supersonic missiles and jet fighters are now being designed by the Pentagon to reach targets—primarily Soviet bombers and cruise missiles—in the far north, among other places. Because of their speed, these would not have to be stationed on Canadian soil, a U.S. Air Force officer recently explained, just fired or flown over it.

Canadian officers were briefed for the first time on A.D.I. in June 1986. The project was discussed again by U.S. and Canadian officials at a Pentagon meeting in January 1987, and the meetings continue. The Canadians requested that the access of their aerospace industry to A.D.I. contracts be improved and that Canadians be allowed to sit on A.D.I.'s management committee. They want to have a seat at the table, in other words, next to the guy from S.D.I. As a member of the Pentagon's A.D.I. steering committee, Canada would also begin to participate in the activities of a more senior group, where the "coordination and integration" of A.D.I. and Star Wars research occurs. A spokesman for the Canadian Department of External Affairs explains, "The fact that the government has taken the position not to participate in the S.D.I. research program does not complicate our activity in other areas of the U.S. military . . . where reps from the S.D.I. might be present for their own purposes."

Now that Ottawa has decided that it does want to get involved, explains the External Affairs official, it will have to prove that it is "prepared to dedicate resources to this area of research." Last June, Canada's chief air defense officer and a senior military scientist traveled to Washington to present ideas on how to track cruise missiles. A joint research and development project on space radar for A.D.I. is now in the offing. The Canadians are also negotiating with the Pentagon to establish a joint endeavor on satellite communications that may eventually be used to control and coordinate A.D.I. and S.D.I. defenses. Canada is beginning to develop its own communications system, capable of surviving the effects of nuclear blasts in space, and wants to become as fully integrated with future Pentagon satellite networks as possible. There are indications that considerable integration between A.D.I. and S.D.I. will be necessary: "If S.D.I. deploys Space or Ground-Based Lasers," says the A.D.I. briefing document, "those not in position to engage ballistic missiles could potentially be used to attack high-flying cruise missiles and bombers."

The strategic implications of Canada's A.D.I. involvement—how it might influence cruise missile deployment patterns, Canada's role within the NORAD alliance or Soviet perceptions of U.S. intentions—have not been exposed to public scrutiny. As one senior aide for a member of the opposition New Democratic Party puts it, Canadian defense policy is being formulated in a "secret and antidemocratic fashion." Lest the cloak of secrecy slip, Canada's military leadership occasionally resorts to trickery. They convinced parliamentarians three years ago that a clause that had been contained in the NORAD treaty prohibiting involvement in ballistic missile defense should be kept out. With the elimination of this clause, the so-called back door into S.D.I. opened wide.

While Ottawa sneaks through this back door, helping to design an air defense system considered by many as essential for a complete Star Wars defense, the Canadian military is engaging in semantic games. A.D.I. must be completed "before you can do an effective S.D.I.," but it is "independent" and "separate" from Star Wars. Such linguistic shenanigans have worked wonders with the Canadian media. *The Ottawa Citizen* recently reported that A.D.I. "is not directly related to the controversial SDI or Star Wars system." In its coverage of the defense policy white paper last June, the *Toronto Star* explained to its readers that space radar research "should not be confused




DRAWINGS BY J-C SUARÈS

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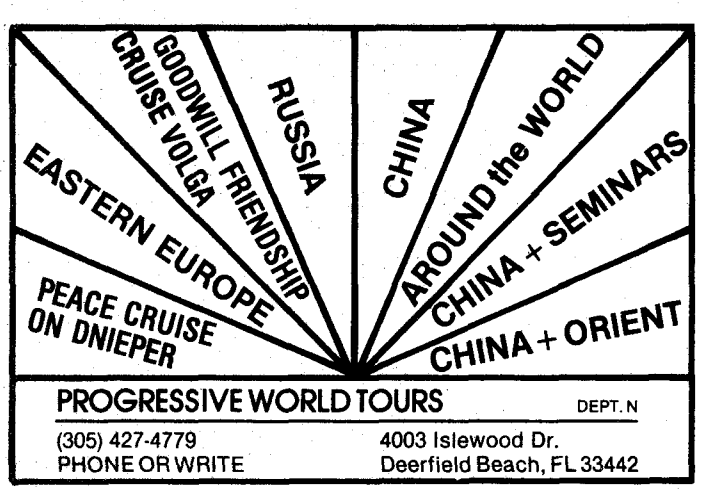
with the controversial U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative."

The Canadian government hasn't hoodwinked everyone, though. According to John Barrett, deputy director of the independent Canadian Centre for Arms Control and Disarmament, government research on space radar comes "from the same strategy of deterrence that inspired and guides" Star Wars. In recent testimony to Parliament's science committee, Barrett advised the government to pursue negotiated cuts in cruise missile arsenals rather than engage in research that encourages the opposite. Two of Barrett's colleagues have warned that the proposed deployment of Canadian submarines in the Arctic may contribute to the expansion of both U.S. and Soviet sea-launched cruise missile arsenals and undermine Canadian security interests allegedly addressed by A.D.I.

Opposition members in the House of Commons have also begun to stir. "We are very concerned that Canada is going to get sucked in all the way to S.D.I. through A.D.I. without having much control over the decision-making process," says Derek Blackburn, defense critic for the New Democratic Party. If Canada's Social Democrats form a government, says Blackburn, they would seek "a new bilateral defense agreement [with the United States] which would exclude S.D.I. and the active, offensive components of A.D.I.," such as ground-based missiles and advanced tactical fighters.

The New Democratic Party may get its chance. According to a poll released last summer by the Canadian Department of External Affairs, 70 percent of the Canadian public believes that the country's interests are being sacrificed in exchange for a close relationship with Washington. For a brief period following that poll, Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives dropped to third place in the popularity ratings behind the N.D.P. and the Liberals. Until the next election, however, Ottawa will continue to be what one retired general calls "a loyal and trusted ally" of the United States. As the Honduras of the north, Canada may not be defusing tensions in the world, but its aerospace industry will make money. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Mulroney will continue to preen himself on the chicken-and-peas circuit and be tossed the occasional unmerited compliment. His comments to that NATO meeting in Quebec City last spring were called "timely" and "forceful" by Canada's daily *Globe and Mail.* □




*GLASNOST* AND EAST GERMANY

# The Free Speech Movement Stirs

A. WINTON JACKSON

Mikhail Gorbachev's call for *glasnost*, or greater openness, has been eagerly snatched up by East German youth seeking relief from the intolerable provincialism, Prussianism and militarism of daily life in the German Democratic Republic. Graffiti displaying the Soviet leader's name have become a common sight for early morning subway passengers in East Berlin and other large cities. By noon, those are invariably whitewashed over by a police force whose efficiency seems to validate Premier Erich Honecker's contention that East Germany has no need of change: Things there are working just fine.

Emboldened both by the winds of change blowing from Moscow and by the progress of détente between the two Germanys, symbolized by Honecker's recent visit to the Federal Republic, dissenting youth and intellectuals have grown increasingly assertive. *Samizdat* cultural and political journalism has begun to appear, and independent peace, environmental and human rights groups, inspired originally by the growth of the Western European peace movement, have enjoyed a modest revival.

But East Germany's rulers seem anxious to distance themselves from Soviet developments, and they are keen to impress this on both Moscow and their own population. On January 17 a large contingent of independent demonstrators attempted to participate in an official parade commemorating the 1919 murder of socialist and antiwar militants Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. Inscribed on their banners was a quotation from Luxemburg's famous essay on the October Revolution: "Freedom is always and exclusively freedom for the one who thinks differently." Brutally set upon by the state security police, more than a hundred demonstrators were imprisoned and charged with riotous assembly. A large number of the jailed protesters—members of a group of citizens whose applications to emigrate have been rejected—were summarily expelled and are now in the West. Among those arrested, however, were a number of political activists committed to working in the G.D.R. who have no desire to leave their country. Many were associated with East Berlin's Environmental Library and its monthly newsletter. Housed in a basement of the Church of Zion, in the Prenzlauer district, the library is East Germany's only independent repository of ecological materials and has long been regarded by the authorities as a prime source of subversion.

Also arrested en route to the demonstration was Stephan Krawczyk, a political songwriter who has been banned for many years from making public performances. Krawczyk

*A. Winton Jackson is the editor of* Across Frontiers, *a quarterly journal reporting on the democratic and socialist opposition in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.*

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was seized with a banner protesting the widespread practice of ***Berufsverbot***, the blacklisting of professionals that has effectively silenced or driven into exile an entire generation of critical intellectual and cultural voices in the G.D.R. More ominous still, Krawczyk's companion, theater director Freya Klier, and activists of the Peace and Human Rights Initiative Bärbel Bohley, Ralf Hirsch, Wolfgang Templin, Lotte Templin and Werner Fischer were arrested early on the morning of January 26. The charge was treason, which carries a potential life sentence.

The Peace and Human Rights Initiative, an antimilitarist group with affinities to Czechoslovakia's Charter 77, has sought for the past two years to widen the space for social initiative and engage the authorities in constructive political dialogue around a broad range of issues, from press freedom to nuclear power plant safety. Members have joined with Western activists protesting U.S. intervention in Central America and loans to Chile. But the ruling party leaders evidently prefer the company of politicians like Franz-Josef Strauss, boss of Bavaria's Christian Social Union, which has been instrumental in arranging West German loans to the G.D.R., to that of activists inspired by Rosa Luxemburg's vision of a democratic socialism.

The demonstration and subsequent arrests received extensive coverage in the West German media, while church services in solidarity with those arrested drew thousands in East Germany. Anxious to salvage the remnants of the G.D.R.'s image abroad, sources close to the government in East Berlin let it be known that all the detainees would be released by the end of the first week of February. Shortly after this annoucement, Krawczyk and Klier turned up in West Berlin, claiming that they had left the country under duress and demanding the right to return. At the end of the week they were joined by the activists from Peace and Human Rights. Hirsch, given a "choice" between emigration and a lengthy prison term, had signed an application to emigrate, while Bohley, Fischer and the Templins were dumped in West Berlin with temporary G.D.R. passports. Given the history of official chicanery on this score, it is questionable that they will ever be readmitted. (Another left-wing songwriter, Wolf Biermann, was traveling on a temporary passport in 1976 when he had his citizenship revoked.)

Democratic oppositionists in East Germany have in the past faced blacklisting, house arrest, prison and forcible expulsion from the country, but the latest police actions exceed anything seen since the 1950s. Democratic opposition in Eastern Europe as a whole, however, has advanced enormously since the end of the cold war. In a spectacular display of solidarity, hundreds of peace and human rights activists and organizations in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union signed a joint statement condemning police repression and demanding the exiled East Germans be given the right of return. Coming only days after coordinated demonstrations in four Eastern European capitals protesting the victimization of Rumanian workers after last fall's strikes in Brasov, the protests appear to be the harbinger of a new grass-roots internationalism that may well prove to be one of the more potent byproducts of ***glasnost***. □


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# EXCHANGE.

(*Continued From Page 254*)

Progressives like Summers and myself tend to place a bizarre double standard on Jackson. It is not enough that he run for President and reach millions with a "progressive agenda." We want him to "develop a serious organization" for a "sustained challenge to the status quo" that will "turn the tide" of the nation. O.K.—but let's hold every candidate to that same standard. Jackson is the only one who comes close. In 1984, Jackson created the Rainbow Coalition. The Rainbow has massive shortcomings, but no other national leader would even contemplate forming anything like it. Indeed, if progressive groups like Citizen Action would join progressive unions in finding ways to relate to it, the Rainbow could be a central part of a progressive challenge to the Democratic Party. What Summers ignores is that progressive groups with a stake in traditional Democratic Party politics find open association with the left too costly. And leftists too often want perfect saviors, not imperfect leaders, and third party movements, not wars of position, inside the Democratic Party.

Ironically, Summers even gets 1984 wrong. She writes that Jackson traded his program for personal position at the convention. In fact, Jackson forced the convention to vote on his minority planks, including resolutions calling for cuts in the military budget and "no first use" of nuclear weapons—in the face of the unified opposition of Hart and Mondale, and without much support from a peace caucus that was wedded to the freeze and didn't want to cause trouble. It wasn't as if there was a broad, well-organized, progressive left waiting to support Jackson in 1984. The major groups—the Freeze, Democratic Socialists of America, National Organization for Women, labor, Citizen Action—folded into Mondale almost before the campaign got under way. They wanted to "go with a winner." The leadership of many of these same groups (D.S.A. excepted) would make the same mistake in 1988 except they can't figure out which of the other candidates is likely to win.

Does Jackson have flaws? Of course—every mainstream journal has reported and magnified them greatly while slighting his strengths and ignoring his message. But the inescapable fact is that there is only one candidate running for the presidency who articulates a radical new direction for the country, who touches and moves working and poor people and who has the potential of making a historic contribution to the nation's course. If organization is to be sustained and program elaborated, Jackson's effort should be built upon not spat upon. *Nation* readers should support and work with the campaign if they care to contribute to this historic project. *Robert L. Borosage*
*Director, Institute for Policy Studies*
*Adviser, Jackson for '88 Campaign*

## WHY WE CAN'T WAIT

*Louisville, Ky.*

*Nation* readers were done a great disservice by Mary Summers in your November 28 issue. Her article purports to be a review of four books on the Rev. Jesse Jackson, his 1984 campaign and the Rainbow Coalition that grew out of that campaign. Actually, it is a statement of Summers' personal view of Jackson and his campaign. Summers sees the 1984 campaign totally through the peephole of her particular view of Jackson's character. We do not share her evaluation of Jackson, but we don't see the campaign through that peephole anyway. The genius of Jesse Jackson is that he is able to articulate the longings of people all across our country, many previously uninvolved in any political movement, who know within themselves that this nation must turn in a new direction.

Repeatedly in human history, leaders have arisen who are able to do this—speak the unspoken vision that history demands. This was Martin Luther King Jr.'s role twenty-five years ago. The moment has come when great numbers of people at the grass roots knew within themselves that the system of segregation could no longer be tolerated. Martin gave eloquent voice to that mass realization. Without his ability to do that, the movement underneath might have died a-borning; but the major historic force was the movement, and Martin himself changed and developed under the impact of that movement. Today, masses of people (of all colors) in our country know that we face a civilizational crisis. The program of the Rainbow Coalition, as articulated by Jackson, offers a way out of our economic, political and moral dilemma. And people—wherever they can hear this program instead of media distortions of it—respond with hope, commitment and organization.

For Summers to compare this phenomenon to Ronald Reagan's ability to make frustrated people "feel good" is ludicrous. Jackson's program offers very specific steps that could be taken tomorrow to turn the country toward justice at home and peace abroad.

For example, to bring economic justice, Jackson proposes among other things the creation of incentives for U.S. corporations to export goods and services instead of jobs. He also suggests the use of pension funds, backed by Federal guarantees, to invest in housing, small business, roads, bridges, transit systems. In foreign affairs, he proposes to create the conditions essential for peace by building a totally new relationship between this country and the Third World—a relationship based on support for economic growth in developing countries, with respect for self-determination.

Similarly, Jackson and the Rainbow propose very specific plans to save the family farm, meet the housing crisis, provide health care to all our people, overhaul our educational system. Many such programs have been proposed before by people representing various constituencies. The new thing today is that for the first time in our history it may be possible to unite a broad array of forces that want a new national direction, and thus create a majority capable of winning at the polls. This possibility cuts across the issue lines that have previously divided movements for change. It also cuts across the racial lines that have destroyed this nation's dream of democracy from its very inception. The possibility of a truly viable multiracial, multiethnic coalition could *not* have developed before now, simply because much struggle, much development, had to come first. In reality, many people have died for this moment.

Once such a pregnant moment for change arrives, it needs many midwives. Many of us see ourselves in that role. Building the Rainbow Coalition into a viable political force has been a tedious process over the past three years; it has involved long hours of work, struggle among ourselves, doorbell ringing, setbacks and frustrations—and we've only just begun. But already the Rainbow is a firmly based nationwide grass-roots organization. In October 1987, 1,300 delegates and observers from thirty-five states attended our second national convention in Raleigh, North Carolina, and we now have fully or provisionally chartered Rainbow organizations in twenty-five states.

It is no accident that the new movement we are building—this unity of diverse forces—is coming together under black leadership. It is the essence of our history that blacks, as they struggled to free themselves, became the motor force that has always pushed the country in a more humane direction. This concept has been articulated by every significant black leader for decades. Dr. King said it over and over, as did most other black activists in the 1960s. Long before that, Paul Robeson and W.E.B. DuBois and others whose names are not so well known projected this as the answer not only for this country but for the world. Such a concept was basic to the brief thrust of Reconstruction in the South.

The meaning of the past forty years is that the qualitative leap forward in the black struggle for freedom opened up the way for all groups seeking progressive change to organize new movements, threw a spotlight on longstanding struggles of other people of color—Native Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans—and made it possible for at least some whites to understand that what helps people of color helps them too. This central truth is now being heard by more and more whites mainly because Jesse Jackson is projecting the idea in terms that masses of people can relate to.

And Jackson was projecting that vision long before Mary Summers was his speech-

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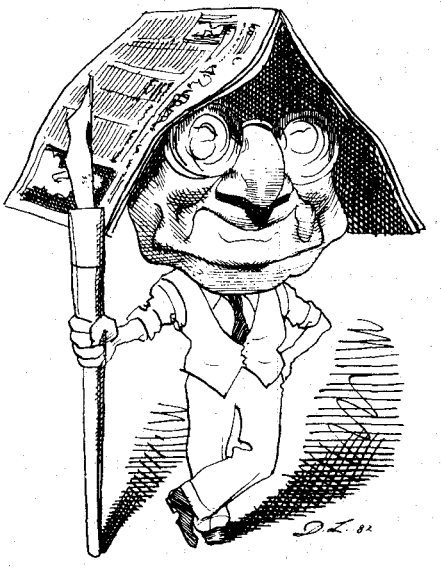

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writer. In an article on why there should be a black candidate for President, published early in 1983, Jackson said this was not a call for a "black agenda" but an "agenda for *the nation* from the black perspective." He said this country looked very different if one were rich and white and male on the one hand—or black, brown, a woman or a young unemployed white on the other. It was in that article that Jackson called for a "coalition of the rejected," saying that the rejected stones, as they came together, could become the cornerstone of a new society.

This perspective is outlined in several of the pre-1984 speeches that are included in Jackson's book—including his speech at the August 1983 March on Washington, where he first called for an entity named the Rainbow Coalition.

We've come a long way since that day, and we have a long way to go; but we are on the way. We urge *Nation* readers who may have been turned away from this movement by Summers' article to read Jesse Jackson's book, ***Straight From the Heart***, and make up their own minds. Then read Sheila Collins's book, ***The Rainbow Challenge***. It is a brilliant analysis of the past twenty-five years of U.S. history—what the thrust of the 1960s meant, what forces took the nation through a 180-degree turn away from humane values before 1980, what was done in the 1984 campaign and where we are now.

As Collins says at the end of her book, our nation is now at a moment of *kairos*—a Greek word meaning "the time of opportunity and fulfillment." It will take much work, in 1988 and beyond, to bring this moment to fruition. We hope many *Nation* readers will join us in meeting that challenge.

People who want to know more about the Rainbow should write or call the National Rainbow Coalition, 733 15th Street NW, Suite 327, Washington, DC 20005; phone (202) 635-0580. (The signers of this letter are all members of the board of the National Rainbow Coalition.)

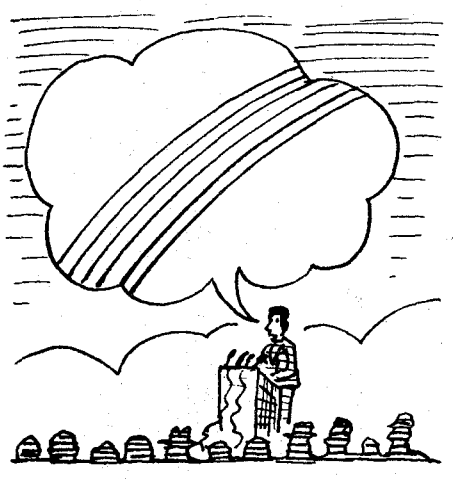
*Anne Braden*
*Co-chair, Southern Organizing Committee for Economic & Social Justice*
*Dave Dellinger*
*Connie Hogarth*
*Director, Westchester People's Action Coalition*
*Arthur Kinoy*
*Co-chair, National Committee for Independent Political Action*
*Sabina Virgo*
*National Coordinator, Foreign Affairs Network, American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees*

## SUMMERS REPLIES

*New Haven*

Together with Andrew Kopkind in his article of December 26/January 2 ["Is Jesse the Great White Hope?"], the authors of these letters seem to concede most of the substance of my criticisms of Jackson's 1984 campaign and his record with Operation Push. They do not argue about history or character. They do not argue that I am wrong about the past; instead, they argue that in writing about the past, I endanger the future. The 1984 campaign, they say, may or may not have had its problems; but the 1988 campaign is truly a populist campaign, truly a Rainbow, truly the hope of the left, etc. No one should be giving voice to any doubts about Jesse Jackson's politics or his record; to do so is to "spit upon" both the man and "the movement" that he represents.

The fact that my critics frame their complaints in these terms makes it somewhat difficult to carry on a real debate. The review that I wrote was of three books about Jackson's 1984 campaign and a volume of his selected speeches, sermons and interviews. I tried to point out some of the implications of the issues raised by these books for 1988, but my article was *not* an evaluation of this campaign (which would be both



arrogant and premature) or an argument that people should not support it. I tried to make it clear that I believe it is possible to have serious concerns about Jackson's goals and strategy and still work in his campaigns because those represent an important opportunity to sharpen the national political debate and to organize on the local level.

I agree with Andrew Kopkind that the fact that Jackson is an opportunist should mean that the left can find significant ways to work with him; I am pleased, not hurt, whenever his campaign seems to suggest that expanding the terms of the political debate and appealing to the ideas and language of the left can be a popular thing to do. The 1988 campaign already seems to show an interesting tension about what the effort to be "mainstream" means in terms of Jackson's ability to use left rhetoric—far more so than the rather conservative thrust of his book of speeches and sermons suggested.

I would never argue that the 1988 campaign does not have the potential to be better than 1984 (a campaign that itself had many positive lessons), or that Jackson and his supporters cannot transcend and transform the limits of his politics as we have seen them do thus far. I would argue, however, that whatever potential the Rainbow Coalition has as a progressive force in American politics is undermined by those supporters who claim that it is wrong to look at the questions I raised about Jackson's history of playing to racial divisions (even when preaching racial unity) and his record of fighting for goals that amount to headlines for himself and a handful of jobs and contracts for a few black businessmen, while doing little to advance any broader strategy for jobs and justice for most black (or white) people. My critics do a serious disservice to this candidate and to his capacity for growth and change, and most especially to the people who vote and work for him, when they imply that none of the contradictions of the past have any relevance today.

The five members of the board of the Rainbow Coalition seem to think of Jackson's supporters as building a "movement" in the abstract, in some great line of march straight from W.E.B. DuBois and Paul Robeson, through Martin Luther King Jr., to Jesse Jackson. While the leaders and movements of the past represent an important source of inspiration to us all, people today are seeking to realize their goals through a particular campaign of a particular man for President. Martin Luther King is not running for President. Jesse Jackson is. W.E.B. DuBois will not be brokering the Democratic Convention. Jesse Jackson may be, and it matters what role he plays as a broker there.

Robert Borosage points out that if it were not for Jackson, there would have been no delegate votes on resolutions at the 1984 convention calling for cuts in the military budget and "no first use" of nuclear weapons. That's true. It is also true that the domestic issues that the Jackson campaign chose to take a stand on were resolutions calling for abolishing second primaries and support for affirmative action programs, topics close to the heart of a few of his associates but of much less relevance to most black (and white) people. Jobs, health care, housing, education and the environment were not the focus of the Jackson debate with the Mondale campaign. Furthermore, the Jackson negotiations with the Mondale campaign did not result in Jackson delegates getting a chance to win on any of their issues. "The Speech" and the chance to cry and sing and sway and hold hands with the Mondale delegates represented a great cathartic moment, a prime-time showcase for all of Jesse Jackson's talent; but it was not a speech that communicated a sense of how to carry on a fight for "a new foreign policy, a new domestic policy" in the context of the Mondale nomination. Many of Jackson's delegates left the convention expressing disappointment and bitterness at the results of all their efforts.

Unless all we ever want to win is a chance to be morally superior losers, it is important

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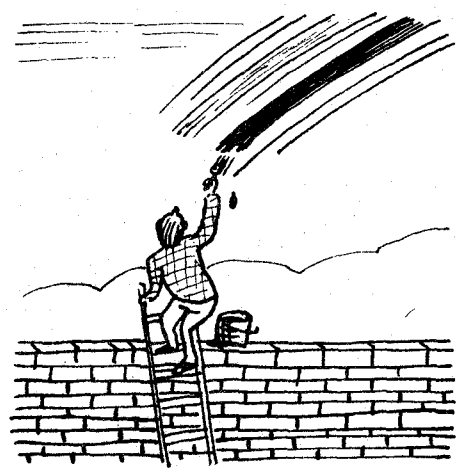
for progressives to be much better prepared to deal with Jackson *and* the other Democratic candidates in 1988. What are the key issues on which we want to promote a real fight? How can we promote a serious strategy to achieve a serious agenda, even though we may lose any number of particular battles, both in the party and with all the individual candidates? Such an effort may sound more messy and disorganized than encouraging everyone to fall in behind the leadership of the Institute for Policy Studies and the Jackson campaign, but the last thing that the left needs is another round of blind optimism, moralism and self-satisfaction followed by another round of disillusionment and cynicism.

We have to think of ourselves as something more than just another interest group. ("He must be a good guy, if he shows up at *our* rallies and speaks to *our* issues.") The question is how well we succeed in entering the mainstream of the political debate, and what we say there. I would agree with my critics that many of Jackson's speeches and position papers offer us important opportunities in both respects. His campaigns have already helped us to develop a language that speaks to the American people as if they were capable of responding to a bold vision of what's wrong with the country and what to do about it. Words are one of the most important aspects of politics, one of the ways in which politicians help to shape the world and are themselves shaped, whatever their personal inclinations and intent. That's why I think that we should all be glad not only for the best of Jackson's speeches but also that Paul Simon wants to claim the traditions of the Democratic Party as the party of jobs and the party of the people, and that now Richard Gephardt seems to think that populist rhetoric is the way to the hearts and minds of the American people.

But words are not everything. It is irresponsible to cite the best of Jackson's speeches as if they represent all we know and all we need to know about the kind of programs that he will fight for (and organize others to fight for) as a leader of the Democratic Party. It is a good thing that Jackson is relating the issues of trade and plant closings to the fact that multinational corporations are taking advantage of "slave labor markets" abroad; but we should also ask what he means when he calls for "incentives" for these corporations to invest in jobs at home. This is, after all, the man who has often spoken with approval of the Reagan plan of using "enterprise zones" with tax breaks for corporations as a solution to the problems of the inner city and promoted black ownership of car dealerships and beverage-bottle franchises as ways to deal with minority unemployment. Speaking eloquently about the problems that we face is a significant service to the whole country; promoting solutions that are tailored to meet the needs of corporate America and a small business elite is not.

I am not offering any saviors or heroes as alternatives to Jackson; nor am I proposing that we should hold him to different standards than we do other candidates. I do not agree with Kopkind that "one of the wonders" of this year's presidential campaign is "the richness and excitement of [the] political debate." In fact, given the alternatives, I understand why Jesse Jackson looks so good to so many people. To me, the general poverty, narrowness and superficiality of the debate is proof of just how bad the Reagan years have been for the Democratic Party; after all that we have been through, after Irangate and *contra*gate and all the sleaze of the Reagan Administration, we have Democratic candidates who seem to be generally incapable of distinguishing themselves, their programs, their ideas, in any sort of bold or interesting way. I certainly do not want to stop anyone from investigating Simon and Gephardt and Dukakis and Hart,



who their friends are and what role they have played in major debates on policy issues. We will not help the left to dig itself out of the hole of the Reagan years, however, if we simply blind ourselves to the contradictions and complexities of Jesse Jackson—or insist that it is impossible to work with the contradictions and complexities of any other candidate.

The left and the Democratic Party are desperately in need of sensible, sane, thoughtful people who will get involved in each of these campaigns and fight for the best rhetoric *and* the best performance; people who will work together when they get to the convention to realize a platform, program and vision that can start to make a difference. There are tremendous pressures, however, on anyone who works in these campaigns to sell his or her goals and the people of this country short. Rigorous outside critics are as important to the process of reminding us of what we really want as are inside fighters. I appreciate people who play either role well; I have tried to undertake each myself, with some thought and care as well as passion. To whatever extent I have failed, I only hope that it will encourage others to do better.

With regard to my critics' more personal attacks, I take some comfort in the fact that Kopkind describes Donna Rice as "a young vulnerable woman" [see "A New Hart Show," Dec. 26/Jan. 2] in the same issue of *The Nation* in which he describes me as a "burn[ed] out" radical. Kopkind is wrong, however, when he implies that the fact that I raise the issues of "anti-Semitism, sexism, separatism and opportunism" means that I am unwilling to accept black leadership. Borosage is wrong when he implies that all my complaints stem from my inability to deal with the fact that "Jackson ran essentially a black campaign in 1984, aimed at rousing *his* people to assert their strength" (emphasis mine). Anti-Semitism, sexism, separatism and opportunism have served the material interests of a handful of black "leaders" fairly well; but they do serious damage to most people (black and white) who find it more difficult to win better jobs, better schools and better housing in a more racially divided world. Taking black leaders seriously means taking their actions and ideas seriously; working with either black or white politicians should mean an ongoing struggle for the best, and against the worst, of the ideas that are prevalent in their respective communities.

Borosage also implies that the fact that I am now in graduate school and that I praised Adolph Reed's book means that I have abandoned the "struggle for change" for the worst sort of self-serving careerism. The fact that I liked Reed's book helped me to decide to go to graduate school, not vice versa. It was an indication that it is possible to carry on important debates in universities and in books, as well as in electoral politics and in speeches. There is not a contradiction between Reed's concern that black leaders should articulate and fight for a concrete agenda for social change in the world of "routinized programmatic politics" and my own point of view on the Jackson campaigns. Reed and I agree that the critical challenge for the left is to learn how to fight for a progressive agenda within the mainstream of the American political debate; neither of us is satisfied with a politics of symbolism, moralism and isolationism. Neither of us likes a politics that promotes crumbs for a few in the name of the many. I often emphasize various positive aspects of the 1984 Jackson campaign, while Reed concentrates on its failure to develop any serious political agenda for the black community; but I think that Reed's critique of Jackson is a crucial one, and that is why I reviewed his book so favorably. I thought that Sheila Collins's book, on the other hand, romanticized history, the left, black politics and the Jackson campaign in ways that serve them all badly. Her book should not stand as the real "insider's" account of the campaign.

*Mary Summers*

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# BOOKS & THE ARTS.

## Putting the Case

JOHN LEONARD

THE TRIAL OF SOCRATES. *By I.F. Stone. Little, Brown. 288 pp. $18.95.*

From this altogether engaging do-it-yourself detective kit, philological meander and owner's manual on free speech and class animus in ancient Athens, we learn as much about I.F. Stone as we do about Socrates. If Socrates felt himself to be too good for his world and almost everybody in it, Stone is the sort of Jeffersonian democrat quite at home in the messy quotidian, with his magnifying glass, inspecting the pores of the polis. The more Socrates goes on about absolute definitions of universals like Virtue, the more Stone wants him to get an honest job. They would not have liked each other in the agora or the Pryntaneum.

Stone's Socrates is likable only when he's in prison, between the verdict and the hemlock, turning Aesop's fables into lyric verse. He is otherwise "evasive" and "ridiculous," "a town character" on "an ego-trip," full of "arid semantics," "immeasurable conceit" and "class prejudice," with "no interest in the rights of the poor [or] social justice" and "no compassion for the common man or the common woman," a bad citizen who "never shed a tear for Athens," "despised democracy and idealized Sparta" and was a lousy husband to Xanthippe besides.

None of this, of course, is punishable by death, or at least it shouldn't have been in Athens. For ten years, as if decoding statistics from the Department of Agriculture or rulings by the Federal Communications Commission, Stone has puzzled over Plato's *Dialogues*, Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, Aristophanes' *Clouds* and *Birds*, the hidden agenda of the tragedians (especially Euripides), this and that in Aristotle, fastidious Thucydides, feckless Plutarch and every lexicon and commentary he could lay his hands on. What exactly *were* the charges against Socrates? Why press them just then, in 399 B.C., when an old man was saying nothing new? Why didn't he defend himself more cleverly, or slip away to exile till the heat was off? How come "a city famous for free speech prosecuted a philosopher guilty of no other crime than exercising it"?

His decoding depends in part—although not as much as you might think—on interpretations of certain words in ancient Greek, which I'm not competent to criticize. Officially, Socrates is on trial because "he corrupts the youth and does not believe in the gods the state believes in, but in other new spiritual beings." This sounds moral and theological, but for Stone it's political. As well as "to corrupt," *diaphtheirein* also means "to lead astray," "subvert" or even "alienate." And the "gods" of the state, he insists, were civic: Peitho, the goddess of Persuasion (see Aristophanes and Demosthenes); the Zeus Agoraios, guardian of popular assemblies (see Herodotus and the *Oresteia*); and, more problematically, Demos, god of the people (see Pausanias).

Likewise, Stone is at pains to establish that Socrates did not defend himself at his trial with "loftiness of style and boldness of speech," as it sometimes reads in translation. In context, *megalegoria* instead means "big talking" or "boastfulness," which is why his words were heard by jurors as *aphronestera* or "senseless, witless, crazed." He might have made of himself a free-speech issue—Stone identifies four different Greek words for the concept in contemporary usage—but he didn't believe in such speech except for "the one who knows," shepherd of the sheepish, philosopher king.

One tiptoes: This terrain is mined by alarming scholars. Remember Meno, who got the short end of a dialogue with Socrates: "And if I am indeed to have my jest, I consider that both in your appearance and in other respects you are extremely like the flat torpedo sea-fish; for it benumbs anyone who approaches and touches it."

But we also see what Stone is up to. He marks his path plainly in prose as clean as pebbles dropped paragraph by artful paragraph on the way to a sadness. (Readers who mourn *I.F. Stone's Weekly* will know what I mean.) If Socrates has come down to us as a secular saint, he was correspondingly understood in Athens to be a secular sinner. He was openly contemptuous of democracy and popular assembly. In his 70 years he spoke neither for nor against any public policy decision, not even the slaughter of all the men of Melos in 416 B.C. and the enslaving of their women and children. (There's no mention in Xenophon or Plato of slavery, or of the poor.) He disdained the Sophists primarily because they taught logic and rhetoric to the uppity middle classes who so threatened the landed aristocracy, to which *he* taught logic and rhetoric.

And two of Socrates' best students, Critias and Alcibiades, had sought to overthrow the city-state. Alcibiades sold out to Sparta, but Critias was worse, "the first Robespierre." In just eight months of the tyranny of the Thirty in 404 B.C., he conspired at the murder of 1,500 Athenians, close to the number that died in the whole last decade of the Peloponnesian War. With the Thirty, as with the One Hundred before them in 411 B.C., Socrates was a silent collaborator, a kind of Heidegger.

And democratic Athens—caught in "a three-cornered class struggle" among oligarchs, bourgeoisie and labor force after surviving two brief flings in eight years with bloody dictatorships deploying mercenary armies, and a near miss just two years before the trial at which Socrates sneered—had reason to be nervous. The problem between Socrates and his accuser, Anytus, may have been personal (having to do with Anytus' son, which would make of Socrates a sort of Oscar Wilde), but most of Athens had had it with pro-Spartan street thugs egged on by the philosopher of a "negative dialectic."

Even so, he might have beaten the rap. A swing of thirty votes out of 500 would have acquitted him, if he hadn't insulted the jurors; if he hadn't brought up Delphi and arrogated to himself a "divine" sanction to do as he pleased; if he had played on the Athenian taste for paradox and delivered the speech Stone writes for him, a quite wonderful Clarence Darrow–like challenge to the assembly to be true to *their* principles instead of his—not an apology, but some serious spirit. Instead he was scornful.

Then, when they had to vote his punishment, either death, as demanded by the prosecution, or an alternative defense proposal—like a salary arbitration in major league baseball, there is no split-

*John Leonard is the television critic for* New York *magazine, a weekly columnist for* New York Newsday *and teaches writing at Columbia University.*

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ting the difference—Socrates actually *lost* eighty votes because of his whimsy and his derision. Later, rather than escape, he'd make suicide jokes. (A prudent Plato left town, stopping in Egypt to pick up caste-system tips for his *Critias*.) Stone, who'd never give up any good fight, can't figure him. "Socrates himself seems to have put the hemlock to his lips." Certainly, he was tired; maybe he was also bored, like Wittgenstein.

If Stone is unkind to Socrates, he is ashamed of Athens. For a Jeffersonian democrat, Athens is the City on the Hill. We read history, as we anthropologize, hoping to see ourselves, and are often shocked at the face of the other. The other might be just as shocked by us, the leering look of all that we've come to know. (Would Plato have written what he did about eugenics in the *Dialogues* if he'd ever met a Nazi? In some ways, Sparta was a classless society.) Never mind that Hellenism was itself only rediscovered, reinvented, in the nineteenth century, and that there's a German Greece, a French Greece and an English Greece, all different. ("Had Höderlin met Jowett, for instance," wrote W.H. Auden, "one suspects that neither would have understood a word the other said, and their parting would have been cold.") Stone needs his own Greece, in spite of the Melos massacre and the fact that women couldn't vote and that even Aristotle thought slavery was "natural."

He needs this Greece so much that he will supply it with that metropolitan sine qua non, newspapers. "The Athenian equivalent of a free press was the theater," he says. The comic poets "played something of the same role in Athens as independent journalists in our world," critics and gossip columnists and "castigators of misdeeds in public office." Not really, but it's touching that Stone can't imagine living anywhere without a daily paper. My wife once wondered in the rubble of Mycenae how anyone could have gotten any thinking done in all that light and heat. I thought maybe in those days they'd had roofs. Newspapers hadn't occurred to me.

Anyway, this Athens of Stone's heart—a kind of New England town meeting of whaling captains, abolitionists, religious dissenters and maybe Robert Frost—let him down in 399 B.C. Where were Nat Hentoff and the Attic Civil Liberties Union?

As for Socrates, well, many of us in college wanted to punch him out. Stone does so for us and it's low fun. But Stone is by nature affirmative—let's roll up our sleeves and get the job done—and generally impatient with anything epistemological, ontological or, especially, metaphysical. "Spooky conundrums," he says. And besides: "If even Kant, with the most systematic answers any metaphysician ever devised, has not wholly satisfied his fellow philosophers, how could Socrates deride his Athenian contemporaries as ignorant for failing the same test?"

This rather misses the point. Socrates was one of the first naysayers; he saw difficulties. He belongs to a long line of philosophers who gnawed their way to the end of what they knew, and then had questions about how and if they really knew it. Worried about essentials, they tended to lose touch. A surprising number of them quit us, if not mad like Nietzsche or suicides like Lucretius, then at least quite oddly: Vico, for instance, lowered by coffin from a window because the stairs of Naples were too narrow; or Kierkegaard, after a campaign of pamphlets against the Danish Church, hating women and dead broke. Many were conservative, even reactionary politically, like the modernists of our own culture who likewise thought their way to the end of art and then turned to tear at that art with their teeth. We consult them, not for practical advice but to hear some dark chords.


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Stone, though, has heard enough. The century deafens with its contempt for the citizen. Too many idealisms have been brutalized. A skeptic, not a cynic, he'd begin again along the grain of our noblest intentions. By disposition a child of the Enlightenment, by habit a hard worker at the homely truths, by sympathies a commoner, by conviction faithful to popular sovereignty, by bitter experience suspicious of official wisdom and statist social engineering—he looks in the sunny Greek light of this "Areopagitica" like an American angel. □

# Eloquent Ingloriousness

MARILYN HACKER

SELECTED POEMS. *By Tony Harrison. Random House. 204 pp. $15.95.*

The American publication of Tony Harrison's *Selected Poems* (released as a King Penguin in England in 1984) is cause for celebration. The copyright and trade conventions that have kept a poet as readable and accomplished as Harrison from American audiences until now are, on the contrary, to be deplored. What can provide a potentially popular novelist with a separate American (or British) contract often prevents the writer of a less "marketable" genre like poetry from being read across the ocean at all, unless the original publisher has a subsidiary in the other country. So non-trans-Atlantic British readers will have had no access to the work of, for example, May Swenson, Richard Howard or Gwendolyn Brooks. And most American readers have not, until now, known of Tony Harrison.

Harrison is not a "new" poet, a particularly "young" poet (he is 50), or a poet whose work requires the understanding of some abstruse aesthetic to be accessible. He brings to his poetry the experience and vocabularies of a specific life, place, class; that very specificity, rendered and orchestrated with consummate craft, is what opens his work to myriad possible readers. He creates, in his best poems, a reality as textured and well observed, as full of exterior events and interior change, as that of the most exuberantly nonminimalist fiction.

I once quipped that if the focus of lyric poetry is love, death and the changing of the seasons, the novel's focus is love, death and the changing of class. By that definition, Tony Harrison is a quintessential fiction-maker. What I return to most frequently in the work of this poet, so unlike myself, yet so similar in his assumption of difference, is the sonnet sequence "The School of Eloquence," which occupies sixty-six pages of the present collection. It is an angry, funny, earthy, erudite poem. Parts of it have made me cry more than once. I'd rather quote "Timer" than describe it:

> Gold survives the fire that's hot enough
> to make you ashes in a standard urn.
> An envelope of coarse official buff
> contains your wedding ring which wouldn't burn.
>
> Dad told me I'd to tell them at St. James's
> that the ring should go in the incinerator.
> That "eternity" inscribed with both their names is
> his surety that they'd be together, 'later'.
>
> I sign for the parcelled clothing as the son,
> the cardy, apron, pants, bra, dress—
>
> the clerk phoned down: 6-8-8-3-1?
> *Has she still her ring on?* (Slight pause) *Yes!*
>
> It's on my warm palm now, your burnished ring!
>
> I feel your ashes, head, arms, breasts, womb, legs,
> sift through its circle slowly, like that thing
> you used to let me watch to time the eggs.

(though my editorial superego wants to strike at least the second two "that"s from stanza two).

"The School of Eloquence" is something between a *Bildungsroman* and a novel of retrospection, recounted in sixteen-line Miltonic sonnets. A bright working-class boy from Leeds (father: bakery worker and former miner; mother: housewife) is educated to "rise beyond his class." His parents encourage him, even as his education, particularly the different spoken language it requires, separates him from them. As a young man, he becomes a writer; as a grown man, he realizes that the matter and substance of his art must be the very language above which he "rose," and its incorporation into literature: the occupation of literature by those it had excluded, silenced. But what he left has changed: His parents are old and are shocked by or indifferent to his outspoken work. His mother dies; his grieving father, uncomforted by an alien son, dies in his turn. Working-class northern row houses are occupied by immigrants with dark skins; unemployment, not the mines, blights young lives. Nothing is as it was and the living dialect recorded by the poet may, he realizes with irony, go the way of Cornish or Welsh: be a dead language or a literary preserve.

Harrison chooses the sonnet to tell this story for the same reason that many American poets have eschewed it: The fourteen-line (or Miltonic/Meredithian sixteen-line) verse paragraph or vignette, historically associated with courtly love, courtly flattery and metaphysical speculation, and with a privileged and educated class, is not (they say) the vehicle for the poetry of those denied privilege, for the poetry of demotic utterance. But Harrison seizes the form precisely to embody his struggle with the language of "educated men." The sequence begins with a Miltonic sonnet entitled "On Not Being Milton," which makes poetry from the challenge of the unspoken:

> The stutter of the scold out of the branks
> of condescension, class and counter-class
> thickens with glottals to a lumpen mass
> of Ludding morphemes closing up their ranks.
> Each swung cast-iron Enoch of Leeds stress
> clangs a forged music on the frames of Art,
> the looms of owned language smashed apart!
>
> Three cheers for mute ingloriousness!
>
> Articulation is the tongue-tied's fighting.
> In the silence round all poetry we quote
> Tidd the Cato Street conspirator who wrote:
>
> *Sir, I Ham a very Bad Hand at Righting.*

Closure is a problem for many sonnet writers. When all but one or two lines demanded by the form are there, a tying-up is required; even in Shakespeare, sometimes the result is abrupt and seems obligatory. Harrison's closures are usually powerful, pulling together disparate,

*Marilyn Hacker is the author of* Assumptions *(Alfred A. Knopf) and* Love, Death, and the Changing of the Seasons *(Arbor House).*

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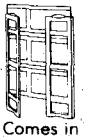
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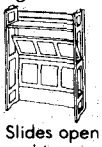
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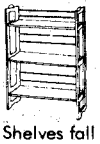
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even warring elements in the poems (the first two quatrains above are intentionally neither mute nor tongue-tied) or, as in "Timer," using a metaphor or simile to knit up a discursive whole.

The struggle between demotic and elevated language is as often the subject of a poem as the parallel struggles between classes or generations:

> 4 words only of *mi 'art aches*
> and . . . 'Mine's broken,
> you barbarian, T.W.!' *He* was nicely spoken.
> 'Can't have our glorious heritage done to death!'
>
> I played the Drunken Porter in *Macbeth.*
>
> ("Them & [uz]")

> And so the lad who gets the alphas works
> the hardest in his class at his translation
> and finds good Ciceronian for Burke's
>
> *a dreadful schism in the British nation.*
>
> ("Classics Society")

Often, in formal poetry, language becomes a collaborator in the creative process, with the necessity of finding a rhyme, an iamb or an assonance prodding the poet to open linguistic files otherwise shut. In Harrison's sonnets, the transmutations and implications of language itself—English versus Latin, dialect versus "standard" English—are the impetus to poetry and provide several linguistic veins to be mined.

The love and death in "The School of Eloquence" are the poet's rediscovered love for, and the deaths of, his parents, viewed initially, once again, through the lens of language-as-difference. Their language was what the young poet had to forswear to become a poet, but it is what he must reclaim in order fully to realize his gift. Moving between two modes of diction, he discovers that this motion is his true subject. But in the poems about "mi mam" and "mi dad," neither theory nor sentimentality obscures the individuals portrayed, in relation to their son or to each other. The widowed father, in particular, is made real, though not reconciled, to his son through grief:

> Baked the day she suddenly dropped dead
> we chew it slowly that last apple pie.
>
> Shocked into sleeplessness you're scared of bed.
> We never could talk much and now don't try.
>
> *You're like book ends, the pair of you,* she'd say.
> *Hog that grate, say nothing, sit, sleep, stare . . .*
>
> The 'scholar' me, you worn out on poor pay,
> only our silence made us seem a pair.
>
> Not as good for staring in, blue gas,
> too regular each bud, each yellow spike.
>
> A night you need my company to pass
> and she not here to tell us we're alike!
>
> Your life's all shattered into smithereens.
>
> Back in our silences and sullen looks,
> for all the Scotch we drink, what's still between's
> not the thirty or so years, but books, books, books.
>
> ("Book Ends I")

These 200-plus pages give the scope and distance of Harrison's development. He was a brilliant crafter from the start (*The Loiners*, published in 1970). He had gone to school to Catullus, Kipling, Browning; perhaps Robert Lowell had made an impression. The younger Harrison's work could be charged with bombast and self-indulgence, but never with inattention to craft. Plenty of verbal fireworks are exploded in these poems, and fire and fireworks are frequent images, associated, often in the space of a poem, with sex, pain, death, drunkenness and epiphany. "The Nuptial Torches," one of the most powerfully realized earlier poems, is a dramatic monologue spoken (in iambic pentameter couplets) by Isabella, the young French bride of Philip of Spain, witnessing an auto-da-fé occasioned by a Spanish naval defeat and her wedding. Sex and violent death by fire are equally strange to her, equally imposed upon her, and, through the experience, inextricably linked:

> Young Carlos de Sessa stripped was good
> For a girl to look at and he spat like wood
> Green from the orchards for the cooking pots.
> Flames ravelled up his flesh into dry knots . . .

The killing fire leads her, willing or not, to her husband's heat:

> O let the King be gentle and not loom
> like Torquemada in the torture room,
> Those wiry Spanish hairs, these nuptial nights
> Crackling like lit tapers in his tights,
> His seed like water spluttered off hot stone.

This is Harrison's one assumption of a female persona in the lyric work (he is also the author of a *Phaedra Brittanica*

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set in India, and has translated the *Oresteia* and *Medea*, which he subtitled *A Sex-War Opera*).

Burning, stench and death lead to sex in "The Nuptial Torches"; they are linked, in the opposite order, in "Allotments," whose speaker's voice prefigures that of "The School of Eloquence." Again in couplets, the poem begins with Leeds's teen-age lovers electrically groping each other in overgrown victory gardens, graveyards, behind the slaughter house:

> Stroked nylon crackled over groin
> and bum . . .
>
> And young, we cuddled by the abbatoir
> Faffing with fastenings, never getting
> far.
> Through sooty shutters the odd
> glimpsed spark
> From hooves on concrete stalls
> scratched at the dark
> And glittered in green eyes. Cowclap
> smacked
> Onto the pavement where the beasts
> were packed
> And offal furnaces with clouds of stench
> Choked other couples off the
> lychgate bench.
>
> The Pole who caught us at it once
> had smelt
> Far worse at Auschwitz and at
> Buchenwald,
> he said, and, pointing to the chim-
> neys, *Meat!*
> *Zat is vere zey murder vat you eat.*

The speaker recalls how, his assignation and his dinner spoiled, he "cried/for the family still pent up in my balls,/for my corned beef sandwich, and for genocide." The reader doesn't know what's become of the young woman—gone home, equally horrified? left standing there by her swain—even though one "you" addresses the retrospection to her.

This masculine myopia ("Allotments" is one of the least egregious examples) characterizes Harrison's earlier work, full as it is of various more or less well realized male characters. For all of them, half of humanity seems to consist only of a series of breasts, bellies and buttocks, of various shades and in various states of undress, all depersonalized, from the unfortunate

> Everything in this rich dark
> craves my exclamation mark.
> Wife! Mouth! Breasts! Thigh!
> ("The Heart of Darkness")

to the Kiplingesque civil servant's "taste" for Nigerian women in "The Songs of the PWD Man," or the author/speaker's desire for diversion in the Kremlin with an Intourist guide ("The Curtain Catullus"). British wife, unknown Russian or

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African, they are equally faceless exotics with no separate existence evoked by the poems, equally objectified. The prevalence of this makes the *male* personae hard to tell apart.

Ten years later, when the poet's work returns to Leeds and origins, how very different is this evocation of a woman/child miner:

> Among stooped getters, grimy,
> knackerbare,
> head down thrusting a 3 cwt corf
> turned your crown bald, your golden
> hair
> chafed fluffy first and then scuffed off
> . . .
> Patience Kershaw, bald hurryer,
> fourteen,
> this wordshift and inwit's a load of
> crap
> for dumping on a slagheap, I mean
> *th'art nobbut summat as wants*
> *raking up.*
>
> ("Working")

Similarly, the sensitivity with which Harrison observes his aging father's reaction to his new black neighbors is extended to the neighbors themselves. The issue of population change and its attendant potential race conflict in a working-class community is confronted by the older poet, who reduced Africans to ornaments and orifices, invisible as sentient subjects, a decade earlier.

Since Harrison's work has not been available to readers this side of the Atlantic, his example of subverting and expanding the possibilities of received form with nonstandard English, and the issue itself of the relation of such form to nonstandard-English speakers, cannot be said to have influenced American writers. But some American poets are exploring parallel courses. The Chicano poet Alberto Ríos and black poets Cheryl Clarke and Carolyn Beard Whitlow come to mind; Derek Walcott (who is West Indian, resident in America by choice) has made stunning formal poetry in Caribbean *patois*, alongside the major body of his work in standard English. Joan Larkin's crown of sonnets about a working-class teen-age girl's drinking and sex-for-approval would, read alongside his texts, rebut the younger Harrison's phallocentrism.

The introduction of recognizably American speech(es) and diction(s) into formal poetry by writers as disparate as Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Robert Hayden and Gwendolyn Brooks was itself a radical and necessary liberation, still in progress. Tony Harrison's best work exemplifies the power of the specific in poetry, as well as the serviceability of elegant form for everyday use. It makes an "outsider's" language accessible at the same time as its embodiment of the struggle lived through that language makes poetry itself accessible. I hope this book finds a wide American public, particularly among readers whom it will empower, by example, to hear—on the page, too—and to utter, with pen and voice, our own mellifluous and varied mother tongues. □

# MUSIC.

## GENE SANTORO

### They Might Be Giants

*Laugh hard, it's a long way to the bank.*
*—Rhythm Section Want Ad*

They scamper onstage, just the two of them with their prerecorded backing tracks and a weird assortment of instruments that includes electric guitar, accordion, baritone sax and stick—as in limb of a tree. They don't wear spandex or black leather or funny suits with water-squirting flowers in their lapels or big floppy shoes on their—well, wherever they'd put them; but they do sometimes don gigantic puppet heads and hands and ridiculous giant turbans that look like something the tomb-builders for Ramses II discarded. They twitch and pogo during their tunes in a schizoid frenzy that suggests they're recent escapees from an electroshock clinic. They are They Might Be Giants, a duo whose whimsical irony and sharp-witted parodies have cut them a path to the high-school and college audience that listens to the Smiths, Sonic Youth, U2 and Run-D.M.C. and has, it seems, begun to perceive the web of social pathology linking their individual *angst*s.

Whimsy and irony aren't words you find nestling comfortably alongside rock and roll in too many places even though they have always had their place in it. As Robert Christgau has suggested, those qualities explain how a lot of Chuck Berry tunes—"Memphis," "Sweet Little Sixteen," "No Particular Place to Go"—gently overcame the distances separating this black adult (over 30 years old and already a prison vet when he penned hit after hit) from white teen-age America. Duckwalking across the stage, slinging his guitar over his back and between

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his legs as he played, Berry is a Founding Father not only of rock and roll but of rock vaudeville.

Berry and other key performers of that first generation—Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard—were the main vehicles by which the minstrel show and vaudeville came into rock and roll. Twist Berry's good-natured view of adolescence into the surly, know-it-all smugness brandished by many teen-agers and you get the Mothers of Invention. The Mothers soon squandered the promise of their early social critiques on two mutually exclusive (though neurotically connected) projects: increasingly feeble "satire" (largely limited to sneering at safe targets like suburban America's hypocrisy) and inflated musical pretensions (leader Frank Zappa's constant citations of Edgard Varèse as his model—the need to justify by appeal to European classicism that infects the American body cultural).

While the Mothers were squatting in the Village in the late 1960s at the theater upstairs from the Cafe Au Go Go, the Fugs were down the block in the basement of the Cafe Wha?, hurling Beat-style lyrics and deliberately disjointed rockabilly- and country-flavored tunes at the tiny audience in a kind of anarcho-hippie cabaret. No small historical irony that this was the club where an unknown guitarist named Jimi Hendrix (calling himself Jimmy James, and his band the Blue Flames), first played on his own. Hendrix, of course, reclaimed and expanded a wilder staging aspect of rock vaudeville, which had been largely dormant (except for the likes of James Brown or the Velvet Underground) outside the black music ghetto known as the "chitlin circuit"; Hendrix had played that circuit, and developed his onstage mania, backing stars like Little Richard and the Isley Brothers.

While Mothers offshoot Captain Beefheart and Fugs offshoot The Holy Modal Rounders plied their odd musical trades, there were other vaudevillians at work in different arenas. Beginning with a free-form radio show in the late 1960s (and *verboten* ever since on commercial radio), Firesign Theatre molded old detective novels, B-movies from the 1930s, TV channel-jumping, social and political radicalism and rock and roll into a thoughtful and hilarious Joycean pastiche that became at once an acute social critique and a lot of recycled fun. Monty Python, their British counterparts on TV, often worked with Neil Innes, co-conspirator in the collection of zany Brits known as the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band. Less overtly political and more self-consciously arty than some of their contemporaries, the Bonzos shared with their fellow vaudevillians the genre's defining traits: a highly developed sense of parody, a broad knowledge of musical formats, a love of wordplay, a keen feel for the ridiculous.

Which brings us to They Might Be Giants. The Giants have indeed been laughing hard all the way from the now-defunct East Village performance club called 8BC (a bomb crater of a basement where I first saw them years ago) to the Ritz (one of New York's top-line venues, where they played mid-January) and MTV (where their video single "Don't Let's Start" is aired three times a day). One of the best things about their drawing closer to the bank is that there's no single cause behind it, no simple way to explain how their quirky parodic anthems, their knotted and witty takes on adolescent viewpoints, have reached out to the numbers they obviously have. The Giants have no major-label contract, and so there's no machine grinding out P.R. releases, spitting out pieces of vinyl for radio stations and print media, rounding up rock critics or hauling in loads of TV promo spots on *The Tonight Show*. Instead, what you have here, as with hip-hop, is a phenomenon that is both fundamental to rock and roll and frequently all but forgotten—word of mouth and spontaneous appeal through the call to rebellion. It's no accident that some Giants' tunes have titles like "Kiss Me Son of God" and "Alienation's for the Rich."

The Giants' sense of how skewed the world is also plays a part in their approach to the music business, which accounts for some of their popularity. Since doors were not exactly opened at the Giants' approach, they devised Dial-a-Song. Pick up the phone, punch in 1-718-387-6962, and you get that day's Giant-penned loony tune (there are more than 300 to choose from). To understand how subversive this tack is, especially in light of its success, you have to understand a few things about the U.S. music industry.

It's no news to anyone that over the last fifteen years the handful of major labels have come to dominate the release of the "product," as they call the items they make from pop music. (Previously they'd occupied themselves by raiding whatever "fad" established an audience


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for itself, as when RCA bought Elvis's contract after his initial hits on the minuscule Sun label.) Plainly put, this effort to regularize the market, to make a more predictable commodity out of recordings and more predictable consumers out of a jumpy patchwork of audiences, was just another instance of the way top-heavy corporations grew via mergers and mutual monopoly agreements in almost all other areas of the U.S. economy during this period. There's no need to invoke a conspiracy theory of history to understand how this narrowing of possibilities for both musicians and audiences is enforced: By an interlocking and self-regulating control apparatus, options are rendered unavailable.

That apparatus, as it currently exists within the recording industry, is built from three main parts. First are the large labels—WEA (Warner-Elektra-Atlantic), CBS, RCA, Capitol-EMI, PolyGram and MCA, all of which shelter clusters of smaller lines beneath their expansive corporate umbrellas. Their sheer distribution muscle—they own the only truly national pipelines to service retailers—both determines what they release (sales are intended to average six digits' worth of "product" to break even) and allows them to overpower any potential competitors. Then there are the large commercial radio stations, whose reach over the airwaves via their high-wattage signals and metropolitan locations is all the more damaging given their rigidly focused and formatted playlists. Their commandments direct them to take what "product" makes it through the pipelines and break it down even further according to the "demographics" (read racist, economic and cultural imperatives) the labels and stations share as ways to categorize sound and decree which are playable on what particular station. (A substantial cadre of "programming consultants" has grown up over the past decade to service just this habit; they do the breakdowns, make the playlists and take the station's responsibility to the audience into their own well-manicured hands.)

Finally (though the bloom is off this particular rose) there is MTV. Initially owned in large part by Warner Communications, WEA's corporate parent, MTV has since been bought by Viacom, a subsidiary of National Amusements that deals extensively in music videotapes. Whatever its ownership, MTV has in effect appropriated the narrowcast formats that have throttled creativity on commercial radio. In short, this triadic bureaucratic tangle may not be able (and doesn't really need) to fix what will be the number one record in ***Billboard*** during a given week, but it can sure as hell choke the range of entry points for musicians and outlets to audiences.

They Might Be Giants neatly sidestepped (and quite possibly undercut) the whole thicket with Dial-a-Song. And when you think about it, what else could they have done, short of accepting their own oblivion as inevitable and just? Outside of college radio, that beleaguered and wildly uneven haven for the idiosyncratic, what programmer would have knowingly (never mind willingly) aired songs like "Youth Culture Killed My Dog," a tragic tale of a puppy whose mind was blown by hip-hop and white funk when all he really loved were Bacharach-David tunes; or "She's an Angel," a literalization of that cliché, which observes of the winged folk, "When they sing you can't hear, there's no air"; or "Everything Right Is Wrong Again," which traces "the line dividing laugh and scream"? (One of the Giants' favorite live ploys is to ask their audience between songs to "scream as if you're in hell.")

Surely one reason the Giants have succeeded in circumventing the industrial apparatus between them and their potential audience is that they give that audience a lot of credit for brains—something few major-label or commercial radio execs can be accused of. Not only are their lyrics consistently well worked and able to turn on thought-provoking paradoxes or allusive situations but their music grips and shakes those lyrics with the tenacity of a grinning pit bull. Thus their brilliantly executed parodies: of Elvis Costello's paranoid Hitchcockian visions, as in "(She Was a) Hotel Detective"; of the Who's 1960s-youth-culture banalities ("Hope That I Get Old Before I Die"); of the pseudo-Rimbaudian babble that Bob Dylan and his ilk all too often palm off as poetry ("Absolutely Bill's Mood"); of that tired country and rock staple, the road song ("Toddler Hiway"); and on and on.

But the Giants aren't pumping out some enervated artsiness. The social implications undergirding their mordant satires and their self-marketing campaign become clear on a number like "Put Your Hand Inside the Puppet Head": "Ads up in the subway are the work of someone/Trying to please their boss/ And though the guy's a pig we all know

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what he wants/Is just to please somebody else/If the puppet head was only busted in/It would be a better thing for everyone involved/And we wouldn't have to cry/Put your hand inside the puppet head." Whether the puppet head is MCA's, I.B.M.'s, A.T.&T.'s or Reagan's, the advice couldn't be better taken. So put your hand inside the puppet head and pull out their LP *They Might Be Giants*, and their twelve-inch single "Don't Let's Start," (both on Bar/None Records); they'll give you as much laughter as you can take and you'll help them edge closer to the bank. That's what I call a fair exchange. □

# THEATER.

## MOIRA HODGSON

### The Cherry Orchard

Peter Brook's production of *The Cherry Orchard* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music clears the dust off the play. There are no gimmicks, no Russian gentry played like eccentric English aristocrats, no malicious peasant upstarts who grab their former masters' heritage. Instead, Brooks creates a believable family with its petty frustrations, nostalgia and abandoned hopes. The action takes place without curtains or scenery in the crumbling Majestic Theater, a gilt and plush vaudeville palace that was recently restored not to its former glory but as a ruin. In front of a decrepit back wall the empty stage is set with Persian carpets, which add to the stripped-bare feeling.

Brook has described Chekhov as being like a perfect filmmaker but "instead of cutting from one image to another—perhaps from one place to another—he switches from one emotion to another just before it gets too heavy. . . . He is the dramatist of life's movement, simultaneously smiling and serious, amusing and bitter." By relying on nuance, tempo and intonation, which are as fundamental to Chekhov as those pauses are to Beckett, Brook gets to the emotional truths of the play.

The characters in *The Cherry Orchard*, which was Chekhov's last work, written shortly before he died at the age of 44, are either hanging on to the past or pressing for change. Aimless and frustrated, they face their casually disintegrating lives with what Kenneth Tynan has described as "a strange, dynamic apathy." Unlike Ibsen's characters, they lack the faith or energy to shape their destinies. And like characters in Pinter, they never listen to one another—which makes them both funny and infuriating. Yet Chekhov understands their weaknesses and treats them with compassion.

Because of their refusal to face the realities of the future, the beautiful, careless Lyubov and her brother, Gaev, lose their estate to Lopakhin, a self-made man and the son of a serf, who proceeds to cut down the magnificent cherry orchard to make way for a profitable housing project. Most actors have played Lopakhin as a heartless bounder, but this was not Chekhov's intention. Lopakhin, he wrote, "is only a merchant, but he is a decent person in every sense, and should conduct himself with complete decorum, like a cultivated man, without pettiness or trickery."

Brian Dennehy, a large, restless bear of a man (familiar to viewers of cop dramas on TV), plays him both as the greedy beast of prey who, the student Trofimov says, "devours everything in its path and so helps to preserve the balance of nature" and as a sensitive soul who loves the woman he ruins "more than my own flesh and blood." His Lopakhin is a solid, practical man who is drawn to money but can't help feeling guilty about his triumph—and is a little bit unsure about himself and his vulgarity.

As Lyubov, Natasha Parry strikes the right note of theatricality and girlish helplessness. She sweeps into the nursery of her bankrupt estate, her dark eyes brimming with tears as she looks out at the orchard, laughing in remembrance of her childhood innocence. Softhearted, she gives away her gold coin to a beggar and will soon return to nurse the man who helped ruin her; she is kittenish, seductive and disillusioned but not drained of faith—and as out of touch with the truth as her brother.

Gaev (played by Erland Josephson) is as childlike as his sister—a dessicated fossil of the old school who comes to life when he pops imaginary billiard balls into a hole or searches in his pocket for a fruit drop to suck on. Josephson has a remarkable pale face, over which emotion flits like a shadow. His long-winded ode to the bookcase is a high point of comedy, in contrast to his entrance after the sale of the orchard, dangling tins of anchovies and herrings he has bought, like an old-age pensioner shambling back from the market with his dinner.

The student Trofimov, who goads them


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all from time to time with uncomfortable truths, is played by Zeljko Ivanek as both a misfit and a prophet. Nervous, fumbling and sincere, he is not afraid of Lopakhin and still believes his idealism will triumph over the latter's capitalism, even though Lopakhin emerges as the only winner in the play.

Of the rest of the cast, the men were generally better than the women, although it should be added that their parts are much easier. David Pierce is a wonderfully unctuous Yasha, the cad drenched in patchouli who flirts with Dunyasha and dreams of going to Paris. Mike Nussbaum is an amusing, gouty Pishchik and Roberts Blossom a superb Firs, fussing around his master, Gaev, and bemoaning the liberation of the serfs.

Performances by Linda Hunt as Charlotta, the governess who does conjuring tricks, and Rebecca Miller as Anya, were unexceptional, while Stephanie Roth's Varya was too good-looking and intelligent—not the simple-minded, plaintive, nunlike creature Chekhov has described. The only jarring performance was Kate Mailer's Dunyasha, which was nasal, broad and overworked.

Elisaveta Lavrova's excellent new translation is pure and idiomatic without being self-conscious or intrusive. Jean Kalman's lighting is wonderfully evocative of the clear Nordic light, and Chloë Obolensky's understated costumes are just right. At times I would have liked a few more chairs onstage—there were moments when the actors sitting on the floor could have been customers examining details in a carpet showroom. The two-and-a-half-hour play is given without intermission, as if Brook were reminding the audience that we must suffer for art's sake. But I'd rather spend a few hours on the Majestic's punishingly hard benches at this honest production than in a comfortable chair at some of the hyped-up junk occupying Broadway theaters this season. □

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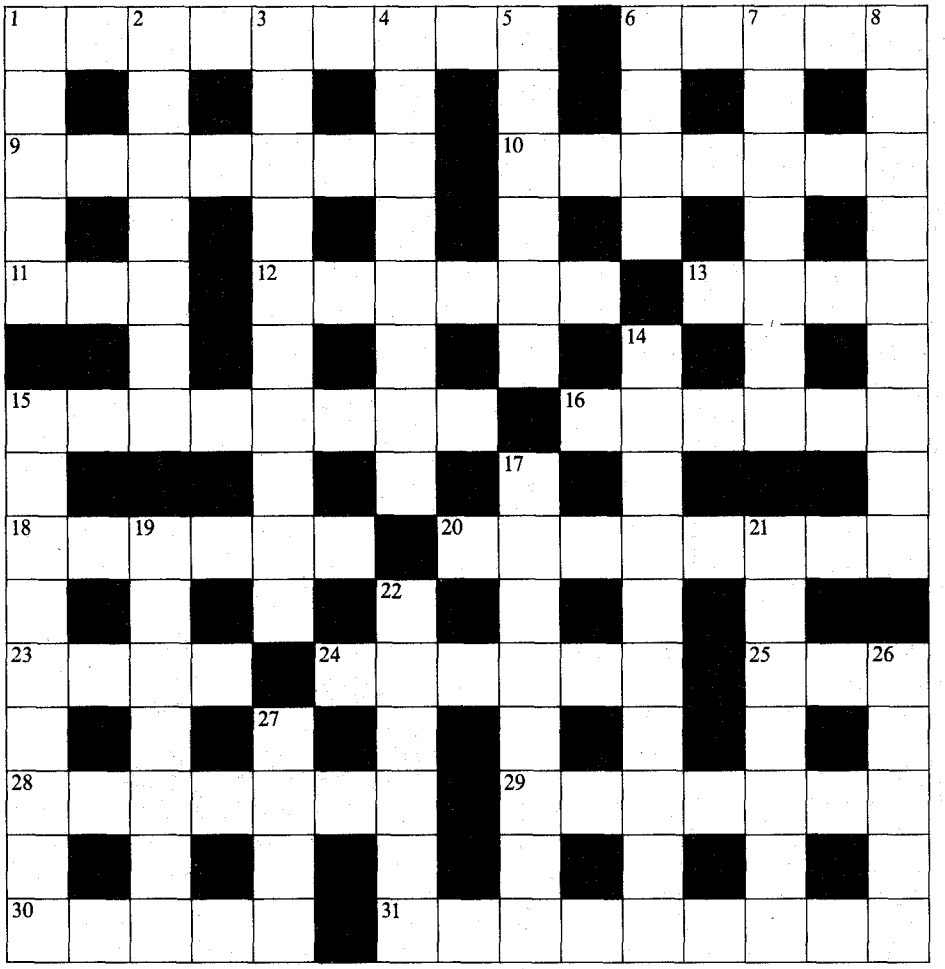
FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 6 Transportation chart, with a soluble protein not going in to show one of the things fans might carry. (9,5)
9 The French investigation of what might be warmer in the car. (3,4)
10 At the time of year the tree gets it, one hopes the customer doesn't. (7)
11 and 12 The announcement of the new lawyer might be discussed over the negotiation table. (9)
13 The singer returns to find 6 down. (4)
15 A little bit of butter, as they say, when the possible result of high living is around, is certainly not for the stay-at-home. (8)
16 What happens when the police strike? You get to duck responsibility! (3,3)
18 Part of the class is trying to help! (6)
20 Cut down part of the mast, by the sound of it, and put in silicate. (8)
23 All these, being enthusiastic listeners. (4)
24 Smoke curls around one, his house possibly being made from blocks. (6)
25 Hang down, in the case of 23, otherwise cut away. (3)
28 The attribution of soul, naturally. (7)
29 This cruciferous plant is sometimes said to be sweet. (7)
30 Gerontius's was by Elgar. (5)
31 See 4 down

DOWN

1 Publicity on the woman's organization is not part of a planned speech. (2,3)
2 If the last word came first, it might hamper the proceedings, but you should get to the point with such things. (7)
3 Possibly Washington's predecessor, on the growth of a political figure. (He would like to have Washington around him for much longer.) (6,4)
4 and 31 across So he's one of the reasons for our tampering with "God Save the King!" (8,9)
5 The 7 was a famous one, as they used to say. (6)
6 Beaverlike sort of 13? (4)
7 A Disney character? No, but perhaps Ruth, when a child? (7)
8 'Twas mercury that made him so! (That 30 could also be made!) (3,6)
14 Hurrah! Spinach is supposed to be so! (4,3,3)
15 It makes the grade vary somewhat, but a body could rest here for a while. (9)
17 A lot of discussion here. (Mine's sort of on classical art.) (8)
19 One might hope the first is an ace, but that's the thing many flyers are in. (7)
21 As part of the scapula, skin is necessary in general. (Revolutionary discovery, of course!) (7)
22 A man who can write well, like I move almost. (7)
26 Asks for information, since certain types of shoes are required. (5)
27 Solid business association, obviously. (4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT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